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The Editors
THATCHER MESSAGE?
REAGAN DOCTRINE?

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VETOING THE VETO

Jeremiah Baruch

COMMUNISTS, CATHOLICS, & INTELLECTUALS

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Correspondence

No double standard

Apache Junction, Ariz.

To the Editors: I must protest Jeremiah Baruch's admiring approval of the late Phil Burton's reapportionment of California's congressional districts, [May 6], the effect of which was nothing less than blatant gerrymandering. If he would condemn such actions by Republicans, surely to condone them by Democrats is to be guilty of a double standard of political morality.

WILLIAM BINDY

The neutral & naked

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: Elliott Wright's incisive analysis of Supreme Court muddlings over religion and government schools [April 8] goes to the heart of current confusions about secularization in American public life. As skeptical as we must be about the Religious New Right's claims about a "secular humanist conspiracy" theirs is a fundamental (fundamentalist?) intuition of considerable merit. Not so much by conspiracy as by mindless precedent and incremental errors we are being forced to what I have called "the naked public square," a practice of the *polis* that is rigorously and undemocratically sterilized against the influence of religiously-grounded values.

Wright's excellent article appeared at a time when, in connection with a related project, I was examining again Diane Ravitch's *The Great School Wars* (1974). I was struck by the prescience of folks like Bishop John Hughes who in the nineteenth century foresaw many of the developments agitating public debate today. Then Roman Catholics and some Lutherans, understanding the impossibility of value-neutral education, pioneered alternative schools into which ultimate values did not have to be smuggled. A century later the work of those pioneers is more pertinent than ever.

In many ways this ought to be "the Catholic moment" in American public life, and education is a critical sphere for that moment's fulfillment. Those who understand the religious grounding of personal and societal reality must, on the one hand, debunk the myth of secularity's value neutrality and, on the other, turn public policy in a direction that empowers people (families) to transmit the values by which they would live. Catholics and Lutherans in particular should reclaim this cause rather than surrendering it to the forces of the Religious New Right which evidence little understanding of the problems and promises of the American experiment. Elliott Wright's analysis underscores, I believe, the urgency of that reclamation project.

(REV.) RICHARD JOHN NEUHAUS

The well-lit review

Ann Arbor, Mich.

To the Editors: If there are prizes for book reviewers, I hope you will nominate Nell Gifford for her discussion of *The Image and the Eye*, by E.H. Gombrich [Apr. 22]. I don't think I have ever seen a more graceful display of the reviewer's art as it concerns works of intellectual consequence. What I like best about the review is its backlighting, the skill and economy with which a context is established. Once we assent to this we cannot but see the importance of what Gombrich is saying. I tend to distrust reviews in which the author doesn't find it necessary to quote at any length from the book being reviewed, but this is a glorious exception. Congratulations, Ms. Gifford.

WALTER H. CLARK, JR.

7,000,000 Ukrainians

Baltimore, Md.

To the Editors; It's amazing how many writers about anti-Semitism and the Holocaust (Whose holocaust is *the*?) slice off the Nazi Holocaust of Jews as one pound of cheese from a slab and then forget that it was processed with and connected to the larger whole.

If Hannah Arendt is correct in asserting in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* that Stalin was Hitler's teacher — and didn't the Germans learn some of their concentration camp techniques from visiting and studying Russian operations on Solovetsky Island in the White Sea? — then why shouldn't the killing of 7,000,000 Ukrainians in the Russian man-made famine of 1932-33 be considered a kind of license for Hitler to murder people? It's O.K., Adolph, nobody will bother you! Here was the *real* Christian failure. . . .

Let's study the twentieth century holocausts chronologically. As a starter the following are suggested for equal time and equal space: Armenian Holocaust (1916), Ukrainian Holocaust (1923-33), Jewish Holocaust, Holocaust of Chinese Nationalists (1946-1949). An effort to awaken the consciences of all Christians for a study of all twentieth century holocausts is eagerly awaited.

PAUL FENCHAK
President, Ukranian Education Assn. of Maryland, Inc.

Food follies

Des Moines, Iowa

To the Editors: "Amen!" to your May 20 editorial, "Down on the Farm." The present price support programs will probably cost over *20 billion* dollars this year. That's an exorbitant price to pay for

(Continued on page 447)

Commonweal welcomes letters on subjects treated in its pages. Letters of not more than 250 or 300 words naturally have a better chance of being published.

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Contents

Volume CX, Number 14

Correspondence 418

Editorials 419

Vetoing the veto: *Jeremiah Baruch* 421

What did you do in the war daddy? *Ross Corson* 422

Stalemate in the Middle East?: *J. Bryan Hehir* 425

Uncorking neo-Prohibition: *Allan Luks* 426

The Yaxan story: *Olivia L.Carrescia & Robert DiNardo* 429

Media: *Frank McConnell* 431

Screen: *Colin L. Westerbeck, Jr.* 433

Verse: *C.W. Pratt, Anne Porter, William C. Hilton, Nancy G. Westerfield* 435

Michael Novak's confession: *John Garvey* 436

Books

Catholics and Radicals: *John C. Cort* 438

A Better World: *Ronald Radosh* 438

Religion on Capitol Hill: *Jim Castelli* 446

Religious booknotes: *Mary Gerhart* 440

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commonweal

NEXT YEAR'S RACE THIS YEAR

WAS THE PRESIDENTIAL straw poll in the Wisconsin Democratic convention the one that broke Walter F. Mondale's back? Looking back, it seems too much to say that Senator Alan Cranston's upset victory was that bad for the former vice president, but there is no doubt that it did him serious damage — damage doubly harmful because it was done by a Californian in a state next door to Mondale's native Minnesota. Coming after the public opinion polls showed him losing ground to Senator John Glenn, the Wisconsin defeat ruined a key element in the Mondale candidacy, the notion that his nomination was inevitable. Mr. Mondale apparently had planned an "interest" campaign, counting on the endorsement of Democratic leaders around the country, big labor and the various interest groups that traditionally make up Democratic voting strength. Senator Cranston, on the other hand, put most of his eggs in the nuclear freeze basket, and it paid off, even though his position is not substantially different on this point from that of the other Democratic candidates. By doing so he managed an identification with the anti-nuclear cause that the other Democratic candidates never achieved. Said Cranston after the voting: "Most observers and analysts and activist leaders in the party have underestimated the deep, deep concerns and apprehensions on the part of the American people about the arms race and the threat of nuclear war." After Wisconsin, that is a lesson other candidates are likely to take to heart.

It is one of the ironies of politics that Senator Glenn, a candidate who did not participate in Wisconsin, should be considered one of its main beneficiaries, and some commentators even think the results there may make Senator Kennedy think about getting back into the race. But Senator Mondale should not be counted out yet, by a long shot, even aside from internal party criticism of some of Senator Cranston's methods in Wisconsin. Mondale has a good organization, a fat treasury, and wide support in the party. True, political observers complain that none of the six announced Democratic candidates has so far managed to set the voters on fire, and that includes Walter Mondale. But maybe his setback in Wisconsin and his decline in the polls vis-à-vis John Glenn will make him drop his safe and sane campaign and lead to a real contest inside the Democratic party. One thing is sure: as the infighting warms up, it will not be enough for Senator Glenn to run as the Democratic Eisenhower; he will have to stake out some hard positions of his own and provide potential Democratic voters with a clear indication of how, if at all, his position differs from that of the Republican party.

All this Democratic jockeying for position is taking place while there is a growing expectation that President Reagan will seek a second term. Certainly the president is acting very much like a candidate, and his political aides are still euphoric over the Thatcher victory in Britain. They are reported to feel certain that Mr. Reagan could win a comparable victory despite such problems as high unemployment and the lack

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of achievement in foreign policy and arms control. Are they correct in their estimates? It seems quite possible, as some commentators have argued, that voters there valued the dramatic drop in inflation more than they worried about unemployment, given the fact that the already existing welfare state measures would cushion the shock for those out of work, as they do here. Indeed, in Britain something like one out of every four of the unemployed themselves cast their ballots for Mrs. Thatcher's Conservative party. Granted, the Labor party ran an inept campaign, and the crucial factor in the election was that the anti-Conservative vote was split between the Labor party and the Liberal-Social Democratic alliance — in spite of which the Conservative vote total was actually down from the last time round. As the campaign progressed, it became increasingly clear that many voters lacked all confidence in Labor's ability to curb unemployment or to manage the economy in general. As a result many Britons simply voted against Labor rather than really voting for the Conservatives. But would not a good many voters in this country, even working-class voters, vote against the Democrats in like manner if Mr. Reagan was successful in portraying them as big spenders who would bring inflation back? The Democrats may be convinced that Ronald Reagan makes a poor president, but they had better not forget that he is a great campaigner. No, if they are to have any chance of winning against him next year, the Democrats have to do a better job of getting across a convincing program in domestic and foreign policy than they have been doing up to now. With the economy apparently on the brink of recovery, any Democratic candidate, whether Walter Mondale, John Glenn, Alan Cranston, or whoever, is likely to find it far from easy to beat Mr. Reagan if he decides to run, and this despite widespread indications in the polls that a majority of the voters strongly disagree with Mr. Reagan's policies on particular issues. In Britain, Mrs. Thatcher won her victory because millions of voters who disliked her specific policies nonetheless admired her for always sticking to her guns, for having firm views even when they disagreed with them, for her wartime resolve on the Falklands — in short, for her "leadership." The parallel with the attitude of many American voters toward President Reagan is too close for Democratic comfort. Unless they can do a lot better than they have been doing, Ronald Thatcher — er, we mean Reagan — may very well pull it off again.

REAGAN DOCTRINE?

Let us be clear: if the Soviet Union were to install weapons aimed at the U.S. or establish a military force in Central America that posed a direct threat to U.S. security or American ability to supply NATO through the Gulf of Mexico or the Caribbean, or which threatened the independence of Mexico, Colombia, or Venezuela, then the United States would be justified in taking immediate military action, unilateral if necessary, against those installations or forces.

We are not isolationists or pacifists — to mention two of the cant labels now popular among hardliners for dismissing opponents of our government's Central American policy. We recognize the reality of the balance of power between the superpowers, that it does, in a very uncomfortable way, keep the peace, or at least that upsetting it radically could bring an enormous risk of war. We also recognize that the Western side of that balance protects crucial liberties from the encroachment of totalitarianism. Finally, we recognize that the principle of nonintervention, however valuable as a guideline for sane international relations, need not be absolute. But none of these concessions, which we share with what is usually considered a "realist" approach to international politics, justifies what the U.S. is doing in Central America.

Sometimes it helps to see our deeds through the eyes of others. The London *Tablet* is a distinguished Catholic weekly that most observers would probably consider distinctly more centrist than *Commonweal*, and that is certainly known for a judicious tone. At the beginning of July, one of its chief commentators wrote a lead column describing examples of torture, massacre, summary execution, brutal rape and murder — all committed by government agents. Where have these atrocities occurred, he asks. "In the Soviet Union, Vietnam, countries where Western principles of humanity and the rule of law do not apply? Perhaps. But certainly they have been done in Central America by governments funded, equipped, and supported by the West's most powerful democracy."

The commentator points out that papal speeches on human dignity and rights do not apply to the Soviet system alone.

> The assault on human rights on our side of the superpower divide is no less appalling than it is on the other. The arguments employed to justify it are no less indefensible on our side than on the other, the lies issuing from the White House about Central America no less contemptible than those issuing from the Kremlin about Afghanistan.
>
> It is striking how similar the arguments to justify American intervention in El Salvador, Guatemala, or Nicaragua have become to those used to justify Russian intervention in Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia: national security, economic interest, the need for a buffer zone closed to "enemy" influence, the danger of a rival ideology infecting one client state and spreading to others. It is equally striking how both superpowers are increasingly finding the church the most awkward critic and exposer of the sophistry they employ to justify the apparatus of repression.

The resemblances between Soviet policy toward Eastern Europe and American policy toward Central America are unavoidable; we have noted them ourselves (February 26, 1982). We also noted the dissimilarities. The Soviet strategic stake in Poland, for example, is probably *greater* than that of the U.S. in Central America. On the other hand, the Sandinistas are not Solidarity. Indeed, the Sandinistas have taken (from afar) the side of Solidarity's oppressors, and there is little to indicate that the Salvadoran guerrillas wouldn't do the same. Nonetheless, the Sandinistas are far less deserving of the label "totalitarian" than our ally General Rios Montt (he of the

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"bum rap") in Guatemala, and at this point, anyway, the majority of Nicaraguans appear to have gained enough from their revolution to defend it fiercely — which the Poles would never do for General Jaruzelski. In short, despite the dissimilarities, the genuine security interests of both the U.S. and the Soviets in their respective "backyards" do not legitimate their holding a military veto over all social and political change.

Which is exactly what the present administration intends to exercise. Defenders of the Reagan policy have come up with a slippery new sophistry: opponents of aid to the Nicaraguan *contras*, they claim, are demanding that the U.S. enforce the Brezhnev Doctrine, the self-decreed Soviet principle that no Communist regime can be reversed. But in fact these American critics are not asking Washington to *protect* Managua against the Somocista-led insurgency; they are asking that Washington stop actively arming and aiding what even the hawkish and pro-Reagan *Economist* terms "brigands in bandoleros." What the American critics reject is an implicit "Reagan Doctrine" which, like its Soviet parallel, decrees that no nearby nation can ever leave the camp of the presiding superpower.

President Reagan, of course, has not announced any such "doctrine." As of this writing, the administration officially denies any intention to overthrow the Nicaraguan government. But both its actions and its ideological convictions cast this official position in doubt. The U.S. military exercises in Central America look exactly like the ones the Soviet Union mounted in Solidarity's salad days. And it is easy to see why the White House might hold that excising the Sandinistas is the most direct route to a solution in El Salvador. Not only would it eliminate what the president terms a Soviet and Cuban "base." Not only would it cut off the arms supply the administration persists in believing is the key to Salvadoran insurgency. It would also teach an unmistakable lesson: even if revolutionaries do take power in El Salvador or elsewhere, they are not going to retain it . . . says the full military might of the United States.

Many have warned that this strategy, possibly involving a major Nicaraguan "incursion" by Honduran troops, and an expanded army of Nicaraguan *contras*, with U.S. logistical, communications, and air support, might entail fierce fighting, acquiescence in a post-victory bloodbath, prolonged repression of social and nationalist aspirations, and enormous long-range damage to America's world posture. For all these reasons, they conclude, it won't work. We agree with the warnings but are not sure about the conclusion. A "Reagan Doctrine" might in fact "work" in Central America, in the same way the Brezhnev Doctrine has so far "worked" in Eastern Europe and possibly may "work" in Afghanistan.

It all depends on what kind of society the United States wants to be.

THE FIRST CASUALTY

One of the most noxious byproducts of Washington's Central American policy is the miasma of lies, half-truths, and contradictions that have been issuing from the administration and its defenders. First there was the pretense that the U.S. was abiding by a congressional ban on using American aid to overthrow the Nicaraguan government. The kind of hair-splitting rationalizations that came from the administration would have been dismissed in a moment had they been mouthed by a Kremlin official. Then there is the insistence that America has the right to arm and train the Salvadoran government forces against guerrilla attack, but that the Soviets and Cuba have no right to do the same for Nicaragua. On the other hand, we can send arms to guerrillas in Afghanistan but the Soviet bloc cannot send arms to guerrillas in Central America. References to elections, democracy, and freedom are wielded in the most cynical fashion — given what the U.S. has been willing to tolerate in El Salvador and Guatemala and is encouraging in Honduras. Our side is "imperfect"; the other side is "totalitarian."

Unfortunately, opponents of U.S. policy are led to counter in the same spirit. A recent publication, "Nicaragua: A Look at the Reality," attempts to provide "viewpoints of people who believe that the present U.S. policies are contrary to the best interests of the U.S. and the Nicaraguan people, and destructive of ideals that many of us cherish." A worthy purpose, but one damaged by the fact that the result makes every attempt to minimize any serious criticism of the Sandinista regime. Published by the Intercommunity Center for Justice and Peace and funded by the New England Holy Cross Fathers, the Sisters of Loretto, and Maryknoll, the document, "invites your dialogue about this publication." We will offer some dialogue: such a one-sided presentation does a disservice to the truth and, looking beyond its immediate propaganda value, to the cause it would serve.

Washington report

VETOING THE VETO

JUSTICE BURGER SAYS, 'NO'

To You, O, Goddess of Efficiency,
Your happy vassals bend the reverent knee
Save when arthritis, your benighted foe,
Sulks in the bones and sourly mumbles "No!"

SAMUEL HOFFENSTEIN had no notion that efficiency's most recent benighted foe would be no one less than the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Warren Burger. In writing the seven-to-two majority opinion *INS vs. Chadha*, he

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gave a somewhat sour "No!" to the fifty-year-old practice of allowing one or both houses of Congress to veto executive actions legislatively. Burger claimed, in an arthritically conceived and articulated decision, that the practice violated constitutional requirements preserving the separation of powers.

"The fact," Justice Burger argued, "that a given law or procedure is efficient, convenient, and useful in facilitating functions of government, standing alone, will not save it if it is contrary to the Constitution. Convenience and efficiency are not the primary objectives — or the hallmarks — of democratic government." Burger is not going to get much dissent from Americans on that line, but he goes on in the same breath to point out that the Court's inquiry is "sharpened" by the increase in legislative veto provisions in statutes delegating authority to executive and independent agencies. Given the wide use and workability of the legislative veto, it would seem that the Court would exercise some semblance of prudence in interpreting the constitutional constraints on a long-standing governmental practice. To the contrary, it seems to have sharpened the appetite of the Court to gorge itself with its own authority. As Justice Byron White observes in his dissent, "Today's decision strikes down in one fell swoop provisions in more laws enacted in Congress than the Court has cumulatively invalidated in its history."

Actually there had been at least 212 statutes with legislative veto provisions. The listing, in an appendix to White's dissent, of fifty-six laws that were in effect did not contain the laws with provisions for veto by congressional committee or those that had been enacted since the list had been compiled. As a result, it appears that at least a hundred laws are now in constitutional limbo — the status of many being unclear as to whether their legislative veto provision could be struck down separately without voiding the entire law. It was on this "severability" question that Justice William Rehnquist chose to dissent. Rehnquist argued that Congress would not have granted the executive branch authority to suspend deportation (as happened, in the case at hand, with Kenya-born Jagdish Rai Chadha until the House overturned the Attorney General's decision in 1976) unless it retained veto power.

The importance of the severability issue is underscored when one views the major policy areas with legislative veto provisions. In foreign policy alone, there is the War Powers Act; it allows Congress, by passing a concurrent resolution (a vote of both houses not requiring a presidential signature), to force the withdrawal of U.S. troops engaged without specific authorization in hostilities overseas. In addition, the Export Control Act of 1976 allows Congress, by concurrent resolution, to override most major presidential decisions to sell military equipment overseas. Congressional action could also, under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Act of 1978, end agreements for the storage and disposal of spent nuclear fuels and the export of nuclear facilities or technology.

In federal spending policy, a cloud of doubt looms over the Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974, in which the impoundment title provides the opportunity for Congress to overturn a presidential attempt to defer, or temporarily delay, the spending of previously appropriated funds. If either chamber adopted a resolution "vetoing" the deferral, the spending could be forced. Many times deferrals involve routine cost-saving steps or other practical matters (such as deferring spending because flooding prevents the construction of a dam). But evidence indicates that many of the deferrals proposed by presidents over the past nine years were on policy grounds. (Congress has so far approved eighty-three deferral-vetoing resolutions.)

WHAT DID YOU DO IN THE WAR, DADDY?

SON OF 'ENOLA GAY'

ROSS CORSON

IN SCHOOL I used to look forward to history class when the teacher discussed the end of World War II, the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The atomic bomb was inevitably portrayed by both teacher and textbook as a glorious triumph of American military and scientific might. This offered me the opportunity, which a young son likes to take advantage of, to boast of my father.

By then an ordinary traveling salesman in Minnesota, my father was distinguished by his service in World War II with the 509th Composite Group, the small military outfit responsible for finishing what the civilian Manhattan Project started — responsible, in other words, for dropping the first atomic bomb. My father had been a jack-of-all-trades, troubleshooting mechanic on B-29s. When selected for the 509th in 1944, he knew only that it was involved in some unidentified "big deal." The group moved in 1945 to the Pacific island of Tinian and there my father helped to prepare the *Enola Gay* for her mysterious, momentous mission in early August.

Our family photo album holds several fascinating black-and-white shots of my father with the *Enola Gay*; they are photographs of the plane much like those I found in my history textbooks. Even more fascinating was my father's ability to describe in detail, from personal experience, the circumstances and events I read about in those textbooks. And he could tell me some things that weren't in the books — the extremely tight security in the 509th and the drunken celebration afterwards when "the brass came pinning ribbons on everyone."

The photographs and anecdotes were awe-inspiring proof for me as a child of my father's important role in one of the great events of the twentieth century, an event honored in history class. This gave me special reason to feel proud of my father and proud to be his son.

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This is also the case with many of the *rescissions* proposed — the other major form of impoundment. If the president believes money should not be spent at all, he can ask Congress to rescind, or cancel, the appropriation making funds available. If both the House and Senate have not approved the rescission within forty-five days, the president must release the funds.

Under the separation-of-powers principle set forth in the *Chadha* case, save for such express exceptions in the Constitution as impeachment, congressional law-making authority requires the participation of both chambers and the president. Since the rescission measure would require the president's signature, it appears that rescissions are not affected by the decision. However, there is concern in many quarters that the legislative history will show that the House and Senate would not have originally come to an agreement on the bill if it had not allowed recourse to *both* forms of impoundment — thus voiding the entire title and again raising the question of the

Humbling thoughts have since intruded, however. The *Enola Gay*, with just one bomb in just one flight, managed to do on the morning of August 6th, 1945, what previously could have been done only by two thousand similar B-29s loaded full with conventional high-explosive bombs. The *Enola Gay*'s single bomb, known informally in the 509th as "the gimmick" (officially as "Little Boy"), killed close to 100,000 Japanese that day. Most of the casualties were civilians, exposing President Truman's effrontery in describing Hiroshima as a "military target."

Truman referred to the atomic bomb as "merely another powerful weapon in the arsenal of righteousness." But, it was not just another powerful weapon and most people grasped that from the start. (By the standards of today's nuclear arms, though, "Little Boy" hardly qualifies even as a powerful weapon.) Apparently, however, most Americans did accept Truman's "arsenal of righteousness" vision and subscribed as well to his opinion that the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs "saved millions of lives," both American and Japanese, by avoiding an invasion of Japan.

During the past two decades, revisionist historians have brought into serious question America's atomic righteousness in 1945. They have documented the American government's unreasonable refusal to negotiate with Japan and its stubborn demand for unconditional surrender, which was dropped immediately after Nagasaki. Diplomatic ineptitude, it seems, allowed the atomic bomb to be used. These historians have also revealed the hidden purposes in the atomic bomb of intimidating the Soviets and denying them a role in the Japanese surrender. The bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki may have been the first shots of the cold war as much as the final shots of World War II.

The morality of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as well as of nuclear arms in general has become quite dubious. Pride in and celebration of the atomic bomb are grimly inappropriate. "Little Boy" and "Fat Man," the Nagasaki bomb, may indeed have been triumphs of American military and scientific might, but they are not triumphs worthy of glory and honor. Sad reflection on our history seems to be in order now that we are burdened by global nuclear peril.

A couple of months ago, I watched a documentary film by Jon Else on Robert Oppenheimer and the Manhattan Project. An historian was asked whether Hiroshima had to be bombed and his answer was shocking for the fatalism it implied. He replied that it probably could not have been any other way because the bureaucratic machinery had been in motion for too long and its motion led invariably to the use of the atomic bomb. An atomic bombing was the necessary conclusion to the Manhattan Project and the 509th Composite Group. If this is true, then my father was a cog — albeit a small cog — in that human machinery which produced the only incidents of atomic warfare so far. He was just an ordinary guy doing his job, following orders, doing what had to be done.

Robert Oppenheimer warned that "the time will come when mankind will curse the names of Los Alamos and Hiroshima." That time has not yet come, but it does seem close. Today there are many people — from high-level scientists and administrators to low-level technicians, assemblers, and operatives — doing their jobs and following orders in the nuclear weapons industry. They may feel proud of their work, but they may wish to consider whether their children will be equally proud or instead will curse, assuming they'll have the chance.

These are all difficult thoughts for me, considering the great enthusiasm and pride I once felt for Hiroshima and Nagasaki because of my father's past. Feeling shame and placing blame are not so important now that those particular events are thirty-eight years old. There is no room for pride anymore and there is no room for self-righteous condemnation either. Our eyes should be on the present and future.

A year after Abe Spitzer dropped the atomic bomb on Nagasaki as pilot of *The Great Artiste*, he wrote a book with Merle Miller describing his experiences and ultimate misgivings. The sentiments in his concluding remarks to *We Dropped the A-Bomb* ought to be even more compelling today than when they were first expressed. "The missions to Hiroshima and Nagasaki are nothing to be proud of at all. But they are missions to be remembered. And never repeated. Anywhere in the world. Ever again."

ROSS CORSON

(Ross Corson, a student at Harvard, worked for two summers as a reporter on the Rochester, Minn., Post-Bulletin, *and as an intern at the* Progressive *magazine.)*

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president's authority to impound funds at all. (There is even some concern as to whether the entire Budget Act would fall as well.) One of the major objections to the use of the regular legislative process for resolving questions of impoundment is that a vote against impoundment may simply encounter a presidential veto — since the president proposed the impoundment of funds in the first place. This would require each House to muster a two-thirds majority to override the veto and, unless the impoundment power were denied altogether, would grant the president, in net effect, an item-veto authority which he does not have under the Constitution.

There are many other important areas affected by the Court's ruling. Consider environmental issues: offshore oil-tract leasing could be overruled by a vote of the House or Senate; the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 permits Congress to disapprove sales of public lands larger than 2,500 acres. But perhaps the policy area where the use of the legislative veto has been closest to the heart of conservatives has been the restraint it has provided on the decisions of the independent regulatory agencies.

The Court reinforced its June 23 *Chadha* decision on the last day of the term, July 6, by setting aside a two-house veto of a Federal Trade Commission used-car rule and a one-house veto on a gas-pricing program promulgated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. Justice White again dissented, pointing out that the two cases "illustrate the constitutional myopia" of *Chadha* and cast further light on its "destructiveness." White observed that "Congress, with the president's consent, characterically empowers the agencies with authorization to issue regulations," and that these regulations have the force of law without the president's concurrence nor are they subject to his veto.

The same problem was raised by White when challenging the logic of the *Chadha* ruling. Once it is appreciated that Congress delegates law-making power to independent and executive agencies, "it is most difficult to understand Article I as forbidding Congress from also reserving a check on legislative power to itself." Justice White articulated the concern of many who, rather than see the legislative veto as congressional tyranny over the executive, regard it as a "necessary check" on the expanding power of executive and independent agencies. He is appropriately concerned that, as a result of the *Chadha* decision, fundamental policy decisions may be made by an appointed official rather than by the body immediately accountable to the people. In expressing regret at the "destructive scope of the Court's holding," White finds the decision to reflect "a profoundly different conception of the Constitution than that held by the Courts which sanctioned the modern administrative state."

Chief Justice Burger contends that the choices he and the majority discern as having been made in the Constitutional Convention "impose burdens on governmental processes that often seem clumsy, inefficient, even unworkable." He maintains that "it is crystal clear . . . that the Framers ranked other values higher than efficiency." But that is not to say that efficiency was an unimportant issue for the Founding Fathers. Alexander Hamilton, for example, extensively detailed the defects of the Articles of Confederation, beginning the *Federalist* thus: "After an unequivocal experience of the inefficiency of the subsisting federal government, you are called upon to deliberate on a new Constitution for the United States of America." Perhaps more pertinently, John Jay in *Federalist* No. 3 expected that, "Once an efficient national government is established, the best men in the country will not only consent to serve but also will generally be appointed to manage it."

Arnold Bennett observed that efficient work is the only method of avoiding hurry. But Burger, in justifying the awkward requirement of the president's participation in all "law-making," favorably cites Hamilton that the reason for the president's veto is "to increase the chances in favor of the community against the passing of bad laws through haste, inadvertence, or design." The *Chadha* decision, ironically, will likely increase the possibility of hasty consideration by foreclosing the efficient allocation of congressional decision-making.

Congress is, of necessity, immediately occupying itself with proposals for alternative ways to control executive actions (e.g., limitations on appropriations and authorizations or modifications of an agency's jurisdiction). Watergate and Vietnam have not yet receded far enough into congressional memories to allow the president or executive officials much time for possible mischief.

How is the modern administrative state to survive the democratic requirements of laws made by representatives of the people, if the execution of those laws is not subject to efficient scrutiny? Granted that better-crafted laws will help to some extent, the Court has come down with a sweeping decision without allowing Congress, or the president, time to consider the implications. The Court may not see that its responsibility is to address this question; but in not doing so, the Supreme Court has provided an example of power exercised without that circumscribed care that it has demanded of the Congress.

JEREMIAH BARUCH

(Jeremiah Baruch is the pseudonym of a Washington writer with a position in government.)

In keeping with *Commonweal*'s usual summer schedule, only one issue will be published each month during July and August. The next issue will be dated September 9.

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Church/world watch

Stalemate in the Middle East?

J. Bryan Hehir

SUMMER IS a dangerous season in the Middle East. This would seem to be the message of the last two years. Last year at this time open war ravaged Lebanon. After Secretary Shultz's recent hurried trip to the region, the fear is growing that the Reagan initiative in the Middle East, launched with his best foreign policy speech last September, is now at a dead end.

The initiative involved a two-track approach. First, it sought to resolve the impasse on the Palestinian issue by generally following the Camp David strategy, but modifying it by proposing a Palestinian homeland tied to Jordan. Second, it committed the United States to work for a withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon. The first objective failed to engage King Hussein; it now is made even less likely by the self-destructive tendencies within the Palestinian movement. The second objective is being shredded by Israeli, Syrian, and PLO resistance to commit themselves to a timetable for total withdrawal from Lebanon. The danger now is, as Ghassan Tueni put it in *Foreign Affairs* last year, that symmetrical withdrawal will become symmetrical occupation.

Whether one places responsibility for the stalemate on lack of U.S. creativity or determination, or upon recalcitrant local actors, the danger of the moment is clear. Moreover, the way out of the present impasse is less than clear. The policy perspectives on the Middle East are very divided. Two recent essays by veteran Middle East analysts highlight the problem.

In a *Commentary* article, "Our Obsolete Middle East Policy," Professor Robert Tucker of Johns Hopkins University indicts both Carter and Reagan policy as fundamentally misguided. The mistaken premises of the policy since the mid-1970s have been that: (a) a new outbreak of fighting in the region will grievously injure U.S. interests; (b) peace can be achieved only if the Palestinian question is resolved; (c) the method of resolution should be a comprehensive regional settlement.

For Tucker, none of these premises accords with the facts of the last decade. He contends that any outbreak of fighting would not pose the threat to U.S. interests similar to that of 1973. He finds U.S. engagement in the Palestinian question a fruitless diversion. U.S. interests are threatened principally in the Persian Gulf; our political and strategic energies should be diverted to the Gulf. Finally, as a general principle the U.S. should accord the Middle East a more modest priority than it has had in the last decade.

A strikingly different perspective and prescription for U.S. policy is found in Harold Saunders's article "Time is Narrowing Choices for Peace" *(Middle East Insight)*. For Saunders, one of the most experienced Middle East analysts in the United States, a laissez-faire U.S. policy is precisely the wrong approach. The drift of events is not promising: "Time is narrowing our choices for a just and lasting peace. . . . We will wake up one morning before long knowing that choices were forfeited in the first half of 1983 that could have saved a new generation from war and kept open the doors to peace."

For Saunders the key to peace is a comprehensive perspective in which each major actor in the Mid-East (Israel, the Arab states, Palestinians, Lebanon and the United States) is faced with specific choices which must be made in different ways from the past. For Tucker, "the strength of the American position in the Middle East has been a function of Israel's power just as it has been a function of the intimacy of the Israel-American relationship." For Saunders, the Israeli-American relationship is a central dimension of policy, but the core issue may be to "establish limits for U.S. support consistent with its view of its own interests and to say precisely what it will and will not support."

On the whole Saunders's analysis, normative concern, and policy prescriptions are more telling for me than Tucker's. But the existence of these two radically different views of where U.S. policy should go highlights the difficulty the administration faces in trying to move away from its present dead end in the Middle East.

J. BRYAN HEHIR

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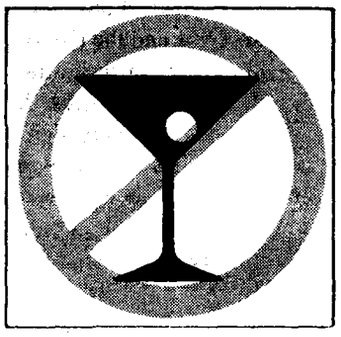

DRINKING BUT NOT DRUNKENNESS

Uncorking neo-Prohibition

ALLAN LUKS

FOR THE FIRST time since Prohibition's repeal in 1933, a federally funded study has called on Washington to pass laws that would significantly reduce how much alcohol Americans drink. While such a recommendation may surprise anyone who thinks that the thirteen-year fiasco of the "noble experiment" definitively settled the matter, *Alcohol and Public Policy: Beyond the Shadow of Prohibition*, by a National Research Council panel, reflects a worldwide trend now starting to be felt in the U.S.

Bitterly labeled by opponents as "neo-Prohibition," this movement to slash alcohol consumption calls for national campaigns that actually encourage drinking with meals while forthrightly stigmatizing drunkenness and dramatically hiking taxes on alcoholic beverages. "In the next decade one can predict that this model . . . will become a major cornerstone of the alcohol policy in many countries, especially in Scandinavia . . . in Canada and *perhaps* the United States," says Dr. David Pitman, sociology research director at Washington University in St. Louis, and a veteran researcher on the problems of alcohol abuse. "A swing back of public opinion, away from complete liberalization and towards a reasonable degree of alcohol control, has been noted in recent years," concludes a recent survey of eighty nations done by the World Health Organization and Canada's Addiction Research Foundation.

This nation's powerful liquor industry, which provided $6.7 billion in taxes to local, state, and federal governments in 1980 and usually can make politicians listen to its concerns, is worried. The 1982 annual meeting of the industry's trade association alerted members to the new "anti-alcohol movement." Other foes include the beer and wine industries, family-owned liquor stores, and those hostile on principle to government interference with private behavior. Advocates, on the other hand — often health professionals — are not part of a formal organization. Yet U.S. supporters visualize this new sentiment not only growing eventually into an identifiable social movement but also a political force whose program would demand heavy taxes on luxury spending, advocate a more moderate lifestyle generally, and confront big business over its responsibility for social ills.

Supporters explain they are not preaching morality but an approach based on new knowledge. Their public education proposals, for example, come from studies that question why groups with traditionally few concerns over alcohol — Jews, Italians, and Orientals — are now experiencing an increase in alcohol-abuse problems. This research concludes that these populations always placed a strong taboo on drunkenness while demonstrating to their children that alcohol was a natural part of meals and celebrations (rather than self-medication used to relax, relieve stress, or overcome inhibitions). But this teaching is disappearing, the studies find, because of acculturation, the general decline of parental influence and a retreat from religious practice.

But can't government and private health agencies educate a nation in the same way these groups once taught their young? The new proposals suggest that campaigns in the media and schools can teach appropriate times to drink while attaching strongly negative values to anyone who became intoxicated.

The new proposals clearly educate people to drink less: They offer intensive awareness campaigns, aimed especially at the young, which emphasize that intoxication is not just to be avoided, but is also an embarrassment to the drinker, his family, and friends. A French campaign has told citizens not to have more than two glasses of wine with the main meal. A British effort aimed at heavy-drinking families in the country's north states: "The northeast drinks more than any other area in the country and it's got more problems because of it!" And these announcements teach specific habits to control consumption: enjoy alcohol with meals, at social occasions, and when with others, but do not drink when alone, or in reaction to stress or before driving.

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A national awareness effort here would not expect to eliminate or even reduce alcoholism — an illness of unknown cause that leaves ten million Americans addicted to alcohol. Neo-Prohibition aims rather at America's ninety million other drinkers, who can enjoy alcohol but when drinking excessively risk becoming a federal statistic: Excessive drinking is involved in 70 percent of deaths from falls, 69 percent of drownings, 83 percent of fire accidents, 40 percent of fatal accidents on the job, and 50 percent of all highway fatalities which is the major killer of youth.

Washington University's Pitman, whose research has been funded by the liquor industry as well as the federal government, declares that an anti-drunkenness, moderate-drinking campaign won't work. Paul Gavaghan of the liquor industry's trade association agrees. "We haven't come out publicly on these control of consumption reports, but Pitman's study is the one that coincides with our views." They argue that, on balance, such a large and unproven campaign should not be attempted since in addition to the chance of failure it could bring back Prohibition's worst excesses of intolerance.

A STRONG DISPUTE also surrounds the other major thrust of neo-Prohibition: significantly increasing alcohol taxes as a way to pressure people to stop drinking abusively. The rationale: Throughout the world the cost of alcoholic beverages has increased far less than the price of other goods. A recent annual report of the distilled spirits industry notes: "Consumer prices of all food products since 1967 advanced almost twice as fast as consumer prices of whiskey." High-tax supporters link this relative price decrease to the rise in per capita alcohol consumption — from 1960 to 1973 it increased forty percent throughout the world — and that jump to the international growth in alcohol-abuse problems.

A report by the National Research Council found: "We conclude that alcohol consumption and the problems caused by it respond to the price of alcoholic beverages, and we infer that the large reductions in the real cost of alcohol to consumers in recent years are likely to have exacerbated drinking problems." Americans increased their drinking by a stiff twenty-five percent in the 1960s, and have continued to drink more, though for the decade of the seventies the increase slowed to eight percent.

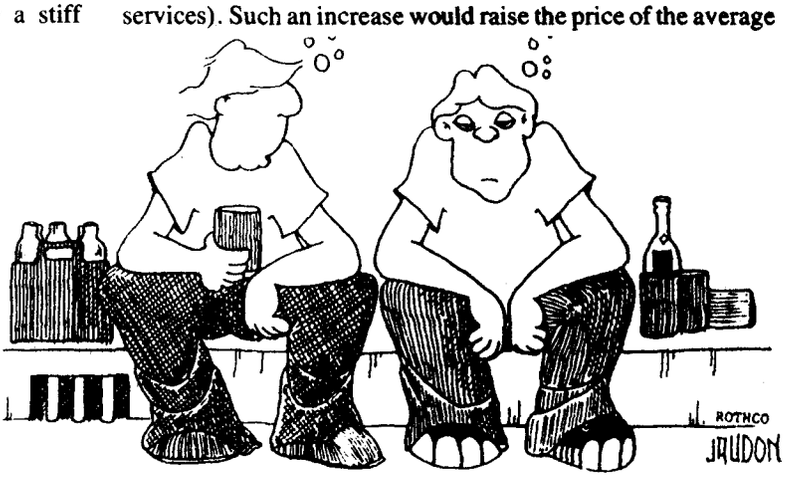
An American averages about three drinks daily — whether three glasses of beer, three cocktails, or three glasses of wine. But about sixteen million persons, or sixteen percent of all drinkers, are considered very heavy users who consume about half of all alcohol sold. So most Americans have less than three drinks each day, while the heavy drinkers take far more.

Joined to a public campaign that places a taboo on excessive consumption, highly taxed, expensive alcohol beverages, the arguments stress, will force heavy drinkers — at least, the six million among them who are not alcoholic — to drink less, reducing both their health problems and the risk of tragic accidents caused by drunkenness. The Finnish Parliament has called for increased taxes on all alcohol beverages. A recent Trinidad study states that when taxes on rum were high, drunken driving accidents fell; highway fatalities jumped when taxes dropped. Dr. Michael Beaubron, a Trinidad psychiatrist, says that if he is told the per capita income and the price of rum for any year he can accurately guess what the accidents were for that period.

Although the Reagan administration has discussed raising alcohol as well as cigarette excise taxes, the amount mentioned was small since the goal was now revenue rather than boosting prices to discourage consumption. U.S. officials are reluctant to consider very large tax hikes because of government's great failure at alcohol regulation during Prohibition. But with this shadow fading, alcohol abuse gaining attention, and proposals calling for stiff taxes being raised in other nations, the high-tax strategy should be considered, the National Research Council's panel concluded. The World Health Organization has even recommended that governments go beyond merely keeping alcohol prices even with the general rate of inflation. "Clearly, raising the real price of alcohol, rather than preventing it from falling, would be a more effective means of reducing consumption."

Federal excise taxes of about $1.66 on a bottle of liquor and less than 4 cents for a bottle of wine have not been increased since 1951, although the consumer price index rose 238 percent in this time, and the beer tax of around 3.6 cents on a pint has not gone up since 1964, while the consumer price index rose 183 percent.

The Center for Science in the Public Interest, in Washington, D.C., which works in the area of nutritional health, has called for tripling federal taxes on wine, beer, and liquor to make up for inflation, as well as hiking the rates on the first two to equal those on distilled spirits. This would give the Treasury an extra $25 billion yearly, the Center estimates (about the amount the Reagan administration has cut health and social services). Such an increase would raise the price of the average



"Look, if we're old enough to kill people in foreign wars, we're old enough to kill them right here on our own highways."

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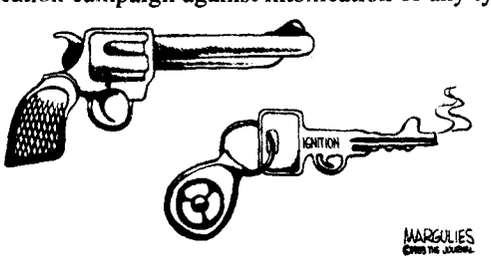
$7.50 bottle of liquor by about $3.30 to $10.80, or 44 percent. Equal tax rates, based on the amount of alcohol in each drink, mean a 12-ounce, 50-cent can of beer would jump to about 77 cents, a hike of 54 percent, and a present $5.00 bottle of wine would go to around $6.50, a 30 percent rise. Per drink costs would rise by far higher percentages as bars mark up these tax increases.

HOW MUCH WOULD higher prices decrease excessive consumption? Philip Cook, at the Institute for Public Policy Studies at Duke University, suggests an elasticity of increased price to decreased consumption of −1.0 or less; the liquor industry guesses at −0.5; workers in the Treasury Department predict between −1.0 to −0.3. These rates mean a boost in the retail cost of a certain alcoholic beverage by say 30 percent could drop its consumption in the U.S. by 30, 15, or 9 percent.

If consumption falls how would alcohol abuse be affected? Professor Cook believes that for every 1 percent increase in retail price, auto deaths would drop by .7 percent and deaths by cirrhosis of the liver by .9 percent. To decrease the nation's highway deaths by a noticeable 25 percent would require a 35 percent price increase.

But will the public and legislators believe that such a hike in consumer prices — requiring greater increases in the alcohol excise tax than ever before approved — should be tried? Many argue that Americans have failed to reduce their driving significantly despite the big increase in gas prices. High-tax supporters respond by noting how the meat industry's sales plummeted when large cost increases combined with heightened concern about avoiding fatty foods. Might Americans offset higher prices by simply switching to less expensive alcoholic beverages? The retail price for a bottle of just the well-known brands of liquor ranged between $10.37 (Dewar's Scotch) and $5.65 (Seagram's Gin) in 1980, a nearly ninety percent fluctuation, and then there are far cheaper beers and wines. Would a pricing policy aimed at eliminating alcohol abuse lead to government continually approving increases until great numbers of people were unable or unwilling to pay for a drink? This opens the way for the illegal manufacture and bootlegging whose corruption waves spread so easily during Prohibition.

A too high tax could produce a threat that was not as serious during Prohibition — pricing heavy drinkers into using other available mood-altering drugs, such as amphetamines, barbiturates, and marijuana. Defenders argue that combined with an education campaign against intoxication of any type, high taxes could lead people away from alcohol and other drugs and to more treatable habits. Consumers will resist large price changes, predicts Frederick Meister, president of the liquor industry's trade association. "It is not sound tax policy to penalize the majority of alcohol consumers for the excesses of a few or the infrequent excesses of the majority." A poll of a representative group of Ontario's population, led by Michael Goodstadt, found two-thirds of all drinkers there would pay more "if the long-term result would be a decrease in the prevalence of alcoholism." Those against cited their belief that a higher cost would have no effect on excessive drinking and also discriminated against poor people. Of the price-increase supporters, primarily women and light drinkers, more than half said they would pay up to $2 more for a bottle of liquor or wine or twelve bottles of beer.



Smith and Wesson . . . Scotch and soda

IF NEO-PROHIBITION'S proposals provoke a public debate in the eighties, as both opponents and supporters predict, then non-alcohol issues also might be raised. One example is the proposal that government should tax *all* luxuries more heavily and reduce the burden on essentials. Luxury spending is "by definition the spending we can most easily forgo," John Kenneth Galbraith has argued in unsuccessful appeals to reorder taxing priorities. Regulating alcohol use through taxes could reinforce existing demands for far higher taxes on cigarettes because of lung cancer and heart disease (the federal tax is 8¢ a pack), on highly sugared products that cause dental cavities, on artificially packed food linked to allergies and hyperactivity, and on other goods associated with health and social problems.

Neo-Prohibition's expansion to include non-alcohol proposals under its banner would parallel Prohibition's experience. Sensing it could lead a great spirit of change, the Prohibition party, in the 1880s, not only fought to outlaw drinking but also had a faction that advocated a strongly populist platform, including support of income tax and free trade, abolition of convict labor, woman's suffrage, a day off each week, government ownership of railroads and utilities, government issue of money, and land grants only to actual settlers. (The party eventually rejected this broad program for a one-theme approach.)

The neo-Prohibition trend grows as the nation enters not only one of its worst periods of recession and unemployment, but also perhaps a permanent age of limitations. While neo-Prohibition's foes, evoking "1984" and Big Brother, warn against letting government regulate private behavior, Orwell's novel also worries about a society where the cost of all goods — except liquor — has risen beyond the budgets of most people and drinking is encouraged to dull awareness of this condition: "There had never been quite enough to eat, one had never had socks or underclothes that were not full of holes, furniture had always been battered and rickety, rooms underheated, tube trains crowded, houses falling to pieces, bread dark-colored, tea a rarity, coffee filthy-tasting, cigarettes insufficient — nothing cheap and plentiful except synthetic gin."

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GUATEMALA'S INDIANS—FLEEING FROM TERROR

The Yaxan story

OLIVIA L. CARRESCIA
& ROBERT DINARDO

NOT LONG AGO five foreigners stood atop a small summit in the mountain forest of Chiapas, Mexico. As a Swiss couple and two American journalists gazed across the hills to some distant mountains, a military helicopter with no insignia hovered over a piece of land their guide called home: Guatemala.

Less than two kilometers from the Guatemalan border, they had come to the outskirts of Lagunas de Yaxan, one acre of mud and bush, where 385 Indian refugees are waiting for an end to their country's bloodshed.

The residents of Yaxan are a small part of a mass exodus of Guatemalan Indians. Thousands have been killed and many communities destroyed in what the National Council of Churches has labeled, "gross and consistent violations of human rights carried out by the armed forces of Guatemala." While both the Mexican government and the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees estimate at 30,000 the number of Guatemalan refugees inside Mexico, unofficial counts run much higher. Last October, the Mexican press reported the number entering Chiapas in one week at 10,000. Another article (in the *New York Times*) claimed over a year ago that some 70,000 refugees had already moved from the border area deeper into Mexico, while unknown numbers of fearful Guatemalans remained hidden deep in Mexico's Lacandón jungle.

Great as these numbers seem, they may merely represent the vanguard in a refugee migration of catastrophic proportions: last year a Mexican government commission pointed to 40,000 Guatemalans waiting near the border, ready to enter its territory; there are perhaps as many as 500,000 refugees displaced inside Guatemala. Should the war in the countryside again intensify around Guatemala's Indian population of three and one-half million, the numbers of them entering Mexico can only swell.

Conditions at many of the Mexican refugee camps have been awful. Outbreaks of malaria, tuberculosis, dengue fever, diarrhea, and flu have caused havoc. Houses are at best pole and thatch huts, and at worst little more than plastic coverings. Employment is minimal to non-existent. Malnutrition is widespread, not only because the refugees have no land to farm, but because the official relief effort is fragmented, in disarray and, some believe, the captive of corruption and political calculation on the part of the Mexican government.

Against this backdrop, it will be bad news for Guatemala's Indians the day the Reagan administration resumes military aid to the regime of General Efrain Rios Montt. Cut off from aid in 1977 (but still receiving items "in the pipeline" until 1980), Guatemala has been pressing to obtain spare parts for its fleet of helicopters, some of which are civilian helicopters quietly purchased in the last two years from commercial suppliers and armed in Guatemala. By manipulating various regulations, the administration has already managed to sell the Guatemalans fifty cargo trucks and one hundred jeeps and last January announced its willingness to back a straight commercial sale — not requiring congressional approval — of $6.3 million worth of military equipment to Guatemala, including earthmoving machinery and spare parts for helicopters and the A-37 attack aircraft used in counterinsurgency warfare. The Guatemalan government said it lacked the resources to make this purchase, but since then a $10 million sale of military equipment to the Rios Montt regime has passed the Senate. On the House side, the Foreign Affairs Committee has voted $10 million for use by Guatemala in military-sponsored construction and medical projects but not for arms.

The more military assistance Rios Montt has, the more he will be able to push his counterinsurgency campaign — currently in a pause but likely to be revived in the close future — against Indian communities. If they are unlucky, like the people of the village of San Francisco, many will die. If they are both lucky and quick — like the people who finally came to Lagunas de Yaxan — they will become part of a great, faceless mass of humanity, the political refugees.

At first sight, under a gentle sun, Yaxan appears to be a little patch of paradise. Situated snuggly along the blue-grey waters of a lagoon, the silvery brown of thatched palm roofs glimmer, and smoke from cooking fires gently wafts from every house. A closer look around belies any picture-postcard impressions. One walks everywhere in ankle-deep mud, surrounded by the insistent cries of hungry children. The primitive Mayan huts, which are damp all day, can freeze one

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to the marrow overnight when the cold mountain wind whips through the camp. Yet the residents of Yaxan seem content to be where they are. "For this piece of land we are thankful to Mexico," says Mateo Ramirez, the elected political leader (representante) of Yaxan. "It is because of them that we are still alive."

The people of Yaxan come from a number of small villages with names such as La Cieniga, Yuxquen, Ushken, and San Mateo Ishtatan. They all have a similar story to tell, that of escaping across the border one step ahead of the Guatemalan army. "The government is like a heavy rain," Mr. Ramirez explains. "The law of the government came down upon us to kill us because they thought we were guerrillas. And so we left rather than stay there and die. In our village (La Cieniga) no one remains."

News about occasional massacres and a government-sponsored terror campaign had reached these border villages more than two years in advance, but the danger seemed far away until the late spring of 1982, when the government paid an unannounced visit. "They were soldiers of the government, that is sure," says Mr. Ramirez, "because you could hear them coming in helicopters. The first time they came was to look us over. They offered us some gifts like drinking water, fertilizer, and some money in the form of credit. They asked us what we needed, and when they looked around they saw that everything was okay."

Some weeks later, say the refugees, government troops again made a sweep of the territory. This time they were not offering gifts. "The army of the government of Guatemala came again in their uniforms," says Andreas Torres Garcia, a soft-spoken man who, when he recounts his last days in Guatemala, has eyes brimming with tears. "There was a place nearby called Ialtoia," he continues, "where there were many corpses on the road, 55 dead on the road. All the people were killed, children too. It was maybe one kilometer from us, and a little boy came running to tell us what happened. When we went there, we saw that they had killed the people and burned all the houses."

Nevertheless, the Indians remained in their villages until July 17 — a year ago — when the massacre of more than three-hundred men, women, and children in the tiny village of San Francisco convinced them it was no longer safe to remain in their own country. "We heard about it from the survivors, the people who were in the field when the government arrived," says Representante Ramirez. "When the soldiers arrived they got all the men together, put them in a house and closed it tightly. Then they threw bombs into it and burned almost everyone in there." The few survivors began spreading word of the massacre, and within a matter of hours of learning the people of La Cieniga decided to flee.

"It was very quick," explains Mr. Ramirez. "We left at night, the very night we found out. We took everything we could carry, including the children and old people. There were some women from a village where all the men had been killed who had left before us, and the government's soldiers met them on the road, killed them and left them there. We saw them, eighteen dead women. And so we saw there was no difference between women, children, and old people. There was no way out, they were just killing everybody. It was better that we leave."

The refugee camp of Yaxan, within view of the border, keeps them tantalizingly and agonizingly close to the land and lives they left behind. (It has also placed them under suspicion by the United States, Mexican, and Guatemalan governments as guerrillas or fellow-travelers.) "We can't go back there," says Mr. Torres, a native of Ushken. "We left our work. There we had coffee, corn, bananas, and palms. We had cattle too." Another man, declining to give his name, adds angrily to this: "The army of the government of Guatemala is destroying everything. They are taking whatever is left, cutting our coffee and eating the people's cows. They burned our houses. We know because where we live is very close to here, and we saw the smoke. Everybody saw it, and there wasn't smoke for nothing."

THEY HAVE, it seems, traded for their safety. What they got in return is Yaxan, with its mud, forced idleness, anonymity, and hunger. The settlement lies virtually in the middle of nowhere, part of a hilly terrain cleared from the dense surrounding forest. A narrow footpath winds its way from the camp to the Mexican outpost of Benito Juarez, a tenuous contact point with the outside world.

"We've only come here to protect our lives and our families," says Mr. Ramirez. "The immigration people told us that we can't do anything, we can't touch anything. Nor can we go looking for work. We must stay here and wait until things get better in Guatemala." The people of Yaxan have been reduced to waiting for meager, erratic handouts of food, medicine, and clothing, and to performing occasional surreptitious labor for the Mexican campesino on whose land they live. The pay for their work, they say, is three handfuls of corn or fifty pesos per laborer a day.

Several times since their arrival in Yaxan last August, word has come from Benito Juarez that food has been delivered. "We aren't sure where it's coming from," says Mr. Ramirez, "but we think the bishop at San Cristobal sends it. The corn flour and beans we get from him lasts three or four days."

No one eats meat or vegetables. Rice and beans are the

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staples of the adults, and a watery rice gruel is standard fare for the sizable flock of children morning, noon, and night. Malnutrition is most pronounced among the young, and may in part have been responsible for the several infant deaths the refugees say have occurred since Yaxan was founded. Diarrhea, they add, is widespread among the children, who average five per household. There are perhaps a dozen chickens in the community providing each family with about three eggs per week.

Yaxan, one of a number of like refugee settlements that string the border area, is supposed to be receiving aid from both the Mexican government and through the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees. A team from the U.S. State Department that visited the area last October found, however, that the effort was neither "well organized or comprehensive." One European woman living in San Cristobal and familiar with the relief effort claims that supplies are not getting to the refugees "because the officials [Mexican] in Comitan who are supposed to be distributing it are stealing it instead, and selling the goods on the black market. It's fairly common knowledge, but nothing is being done to stop it."

The diocese of the San Cristobal, headed by Bishop Samuel Ruiz Garcia, has tried to bring aid to the displaced Indians, but its effort has been circumscribed by a lack of both funds and people, plus a reluctance on the part of its priests and nuns to let outsiders take a part in their effort. For the group of fourteen camps that Yaxan is a part of, two priests and two nuns bear the full weight of ministering to the myriad needs of thousands, not all of them refugees. "Really, we're not here primarily to help the refugees," says Sister Gloria Leon. "Our first job is to help the Mexican peasants, so when the Guatemalans complain that there isn't much food or help they don't understand that there isn't much of anything or anybody to go around."

There is a fairly large community of Europeans and Americans living in San Cristobal among Chiapas's already sizable Indian population. Some of them have tried to help on their own with an ad hoc assistance program. Too often, however, their well-intentioned efforts lack the necessary guidance to make it effective. Such was the case of the Swiss couple, who brought a supply of malaria medicine to Yaxan. "Up here in the mountains," they were told by Mr. Ramirez when he learned of their gift, "there is a good wind, and so there is no malaria. That [medicine] is needed by those down in the hotter climate. What we need here," he gently explained, "is more food."

The people of Yaxan are taking advantage of what little assistance has been offered. Several of the men have taken part in a Mexican government-sponsored clinic set up to improve both sanitary conditions and health care in the border camps. The refugees now talk of learning about better care of their food and better practices for personal hygiene. They say that far fewer people have become ill since the clinic was held.

Several days before our arrival, Yaxan got its first visit by one of the nuns from nearby Xiscau. She offered help in organizing the camp's women into collectives so they could make their palm floor mats, called petates, which they use to line the mud floors of their huts. She also offered to provide paper and pencils, to help them set up a school so the children could again study Spanish. (Very few women and children speak it, their native tongue being Chuj, a Mayan dialect.) Because of the war in the Guatemalan countryside, government school-teachers had been absent from the villages for over two years.

Following a meeting of Yaxan's men to discuss the offer, Mr. Ramirez explained: "Yes, we're going to have a school. We agreed on that. We don't want the children growing up without learning to read and write Spanish. We want them to be able to get by in life."

Media

A ROCK POET

FROM FITZGERALD TO SPRINGSTEEN

IN HIS RECENTLY videotaped, brilliant live performance, Robin Williams concludes the act by giving his impression of "Bruce Springsteen as sung by Elmer Fudd." Donning the classic Fudd hunting cap from all those Warner Brothers cartoons, he slips also into the unmistakable Fudd lisp, and does Springsteen's great hymn to teenage eroticism, "Fire." And the audience, quite properly, roars.

But the point, for me, is not just the comic genius of Williams. The point of the joke is that *both* halves of the parody are equally well known. After ten years on the American scene, Springsteen is almost as deeply inserted into the national consciousness as the great Elmer Fudd. If that isn't fame, I don't know what is.

But not even "fame" quite covers the Springsteen phenomenon. Rock and roll singers have earned fame, after all, before Springsteen — or Bruce, as his fans call him (and I am a fan) — earned it; and they will again. Bruce is something else (all meanings of that locution implied). He is a legitimate American mythologist, a storyteller of clear and authentic talent and, I would say, a major American poet.

I say that with some trepidation, since the last time I said it, when I was teaching at Northwestern University, the chairman of my department called me into his office and seriously suggested that I go into therapy. Nevertheless, I think my chairman was wrong and I am right. (I usually do.) Wordsworth and Whitman, the great original and the most outrageously, Americanly excessive of romantic poets, both insisted that the poetry of the future, if it ever came to be written, would be the poetry of the ordinary, even of the vulgar, raised to the level of imaginative urgency: a "simple product of the common day," as Wordsworth says. And Whitman's dream of a truly democratic poetry *can* mean, among other things, that rock and roll, with its combination of childishly simple rhythms and harmonies and often acidulously intelligent lyrics, might be one realization of that visionary hope.

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At any rate, as initial evidence, I submit the first stanza of Springsteen's most famous song, "Born to Run," from the album of the same name:

In the day we sweat it out in the streets
of a runaway American dream
At night we ride through mansions of glory
in suicide machines
Sprung from cages out on Highway 9
Chrome wheeled, fuel injected
And steppin' out over the line
Baby this town rips the bones
from your back
It's a death trap,
it's a suicide rap
We gotta get out while we're young
Cause tramps like us,
baby we were born to run.

The "mansions of glory" (New Jersey's neon-lit highway culture) and the image of these desperate seekers of the dream "sprung from cages out on Highway 9" ensure, all by themselves, the power of the stanza. But there is also the immense undercurrent of melancholy — the autos, the instruments of escape, are after all "suicide machines" for all their power and beauty — and that undercurrent guarantees that this is writing of a high and humane order, indeed. Springsteen understands, and articulates in song after song, the fact that the American quest for an infinitely expansive future is, in the end, a quest — or a compulsion — for failure.

And that leads to another association, perhaps the most improbable and certainly the most revealing for Springsteen: F. Scott Fitzgerald. An Irish Catholic, obsessed with the dissonance between the American myth of success and the inevitable, ineluctable price of success (your soul, of course), and therefore compelled to invent fiction after fiction exploring the complexities of that dissonance: that description applies equally to the stories of Fitzgerald and those of Springsteen.

The difference is that Springsteen's stories are shorter — they are, after all, rock lyrics — and that they are wiser. Fitzgerald was at the end swallowed, eaten up by the very mechanism of success he had anatomized so perceptively in his best fiction. As André Le Vot suggests in his new, splendid biography, that was always Fitzgerald's theme as a writer and his fate, his psychic mistress as a man: to succeed on the world's terms is to fail, horribly and irrevocably, on the terms of one's own soul.

Springsteen democratizes Fitzgerald. His heroes are not the elegant, wealthy winners of Fitzgerald's twenties, but the lost, disappointed losers of America in the seventies and eighties. And that is quite correct, for as the American dream of infinite possibility has expanded, so has the attendant despair at the loss of that promise.

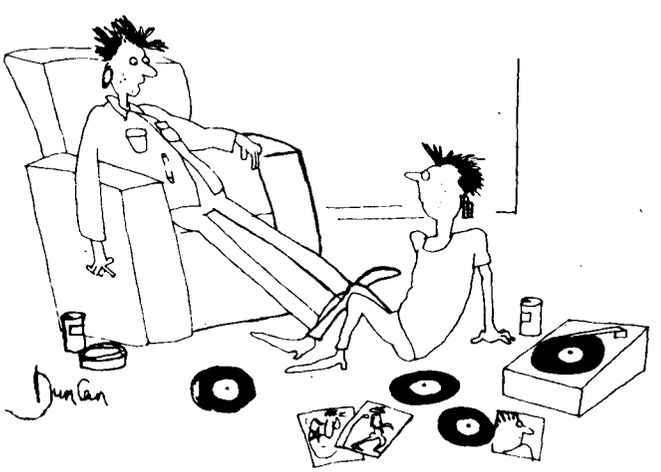
"It's a town full of losers, I'm pullin' out of here to win," sings the narrator of "Thunder Road" — again from the *Born to Run* album. But *every* town is full of losers: finding that out is also called growing up, and growing up is also called learning that Freedom Is Always Conditional. A student of mine once paraphrased the difference between Springsteen's albums *Born to Run* and *Darkness on the Edge of Town* by saying "*Born to Run* is about, you're twenty-one and you've got to get away; and *Darkness* is about, you're thirty and you didn't."

Well, o.k. Life is a vale of tears, hope is almost always betrayed by its own realization, and the antinomy of gain and loss is the stuff of all great writing from Homer to Mickey Spillane. In other words — as anyone who has ever tried to write knows — the *big* themes have all already been used up. How in the world to reclaim them?

Through rock and roll: at least, that is Springsteen's answer, and it seems to work. It is a music made of clichés; but Springsteen has discovered — as major writers do — that part of art's function is to rediscover the truth *within* cliché.

A friend asks the mad Roman emperor in Camus's *Caligula* what disturbs him so, and Caligula replies, "Men die — and they are not happy." That is a cliché, and it is also the immitigable truth that broods over all our lives, redeemed from banality by Camus's art. In the same way, the disillusioned speaker of Springsteen's "The River" asks of his ruined marriage and ruined hopes, "Is a dream a lie if it don't come true, or is it something worse?" The great poignancy of that question, like the poignancy of Camus's line, comes from the deliberate simplicity with which it is uttered — a simplicity that is its own defense against our attempts to fend it off.

"The Promised Land" is a phrase that occurs again and again in his songs. And it is not just the Promised Land of the American dream — the same dream of infinite accomplishment that lured Gatsby to the quest of his Daisy and finally to his doom — but it is also the Promised Land of Christian expectation, mutated into the ideal of unlimited purchasing power. Henry James once said (it is the wisest saying I know) that to be *truly* wealthy was to be able to satisfy every requirement of the imagination. And all of us — at least all of us who have grown up — know that that is impossible. Springsteen's songs are *about* the impossibility and the tormenting inescapability of that debased messianism.



"I'm getting more into classical music now. You know, Stones, Beatles . . ."

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"Hey ho, rock and roll, deliver me from nowhere": that is the last line of the song, "Open All Night," from his latest and most stunning album, *Nebraska*. And notice the word "deliver": I think that Springsteen does mean it in the theological sense. Chuck Berry (virtually the founder of the art) sang thirty years ago "Long live rock and roll"; but Bruce's line is different, is a prayer and not a blessing. Because he is so deeply encased in, surrounded by the culture of rock, he can do what no rock singer before him has done: raise it to the level of metaphor, which is to say the basis for a theological vision of the world.

Is it right to associate Springsteen's songs with Fitzgerald, James, and Whitman? Of course it is. Because he continues the American enterprise of struggling against the given, of resisting the world as it is in the expectation — the always deflected expectation — of a promise sometime to be realized. One last association: Reinhold Niebuhr, in *The Irony of American History*, argued that the essential irony of American history was its inability to distinguish between expectation and the inevitable disappointment of expectation: we hope for *everything*, forgetting that that hope itself is self-defeating. Springsteen's great gift is just that he rearticulates that indispensable insight — and rearticulates it in the most contemporary, which is also of course the most permanent of terms.

FRANK McCONNELL

(Frank McConnell is a member of the English Department at the University of California, Santa Barbara.)

Screen

ON THE BEACH

THE SUMMER SCHEDULE

LIKE THE KIDS in it, *War Games* peaks early. It never lives up to the promise of some opening scenes. In them, an unassuming kid named Dave (Matthew Broderick) arrives late for school because he can't tear himself away from a video game. He gets to bio class just in time to be handed back a test with an F on it, and to bungle a question about asexual reproduction. His own relationship with his girl Jennifer (Ally Sheedy) is a curiously asexual one. When he invites her up to his room, she hesitates. "Aren't your parents home?" she asks warily, but then follows him upstairs. There he switches on his computer terminal to show her how he can change grades in the school's data bank. He raises her bio grade along with his own, which makes her wary again. She cuts her visit short, as if he'd gotten fresh.

There's a sly suggestion here that computers are replacing biology — replacing not only the science, but sex itself as the basis of relationships between boys and girls. These young lovers are not so futuristic as they first seem, however. They appeal as much to a nostalgia for the kids of the past, before adolescents became promiscuous the way they are today. Jennifer and Dave are the next generation. They represent a new consciousness. But they also recover for us the lost innocence of our youth. They are at once harbingers of things to come and a throwback to the America that existed before the sixties. Dave is an old-fashioned American in many ways. His anti-intellectualism, his renegade mentality, his intuitive grasp of machines are very much in the American grain. The notion that playing video games leads to a genius for computers is pure bunk, of course. But it's attractive bunk. Dave and Jennifer are hard to resist. They seem a hopeful sign. They re-establish the human element in the age of technology.

At Norad Command not far from Dave's home, the human element is thought of as a subversive element. Technocrat John McKittrick (Dabney Coleman) has had all personnel taken "out of the loop" of computers that launch missiles. When Dave accidentally happens on a "back door" in Norad's programs, he thinks he's playing games with a toy company, but Norad thinks he's an incoming Russian strike. The situation is desperate, but not serious. As Dave goes eyeball to eyeball with Norad, we can see encouraging similarities between them. While the kids munch Doritos and slurp Tab at

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their terminal, Norad's ranking general takes a chaw at his. Even McKittrick is nervously chewing, on a stick of gum, thus reminding us that he's still human too. When he has to dash off to a high-level meeting, he hands the gum to his assistant (and girlfriend), who pops the a-b-c wad into her own mouth. That's the sort of puppy-love gesture we might expect from Dave and Jennifer. There's hope left for mankind after all.

The stand-off between Dave and Norad would seem a fail-safe formula. But director Jon Badham has already shown this summer, in *Blue Thunder*, that he can botch a promising scenario. He gets help this time from writers Lawrence Lasker and Walter F. Parkes, who throw a ringer into their script in the person of games theorist and original Norad programmer Steven Falken (John Wood). He defuses the confrontation between Dave and Norad and generally steals the movie's thunder from the kids. *War Games* would have been better had the filmmakers been more audacious. They should have had enough faith in their precocious hero and heroine to let them play out the plot to its endgame unaided.

ANOTHER FILM already in production sounds as if intended to cash in on *War Games'* popularity. (It's *The Falcon and the Snowman*, about kids who steal secrets from computers and sell them to Russia.) For now, though, *War Games* has the distinction of novelty. None of the other summer biggies — *Octopussy, Return of the Jedi, Superman III* and *Twilight Zone* — can make this claim. Of these, *Jedi* is best because George Lucas and co-scriptwriter Lawrence Kasdan do manage to inject something new into the now too-familiar *Star Wars* saga. The innovation is "Ewoks," a race of kuala-like creatures living on "the forest moon of Endor." The showdown between Luke (Mark Hamill) and Darth Vader (i.e., Luke's Dark Father) seems a bit stale and anticlimactic by the time we get to it in this third episode of the trilogy. But the Ewoks, along with Jabba the Hutt, a brigand from whom Han Solo (Harrison Ford) must be rescued, provide enough entertainment to carry *Jedi*.

While Luke does battle with Vader aboard a new Death Star, Han and Princess Leia (Carrie Fisher) maraud through the primeval forest inhabited by the Ewoks, trying to break into the bunker from which the Star's defense shield is generated. The contrast between these *mises en scène* is so stark that at the point when cross-cutting between them begins, one California audience rioted. Everybody was convinced the reels were out of sequence. The disorientation was not only spatial, but temporal. One setting represents a technological future, the other a primordial past. The evil such a future contains is summed up by a warning Luke receives that "Your father is more machine than man now." Ewoks, on the other hand, are a Stone-Age race of extraordinary gentleness, tree-dwellers like the legendary Tasaday. They might even remind us of the benevolent Falken in *War Games*, who broods constantly on pre-historic times. The final wisdom *Star Wars* has for us is the same found in *War Games* — that the world can be saved from technology only by a return to what is instinctively, perhaps primitively, human.

This isn't the only point on which the two films concur. The role the Emperor (Ian McDiarmid) plays in *Jedi* is, despite his malevolence, the same that Falken has in *War Games*. The Emperor draws off Luke's fury, leaving him free for a last-minute reconciliation with Vader. Like Falken, the Emperor is a lightning rod installed in the movie to keep it from being burned down by its own plot. We might expect that the sequels would be too much like their predecessors, but the problem is more insidious than that. It is that all these movies are too much like each other. They seem to be made with interchangeable parts. Thus the warning about Vader's having become "more machine than man" might be sounded as well in *Superman III*, one of whose villains is transformed into a robot right before our eyes. In this new movie, Superman (Christopher Reeves) is almost turned to the Dark Side of the Force, like Vader. Though Superman must save himself, what saves the film is Richard Pryor, who is at the same time an intuitive computer genius like Dave in *War Games*, and an overgrown Ewok from *Jedi*. Like the Ewoks, Pryor must carry the movie for its exhausted super-hero.

These films fall together in our minds like a burnt-out star. They leave a black hole in our collective imagination. The universal myths for which they reach tend to collapse into a single myth, a generalization of such crude mass appeal that we can no longer tell one movie from another. They aspire to the quality of an instant cliché. That's why it no longer matters who directs a *Star Wars* episode. Still, a film like *Jedi* remains light years beyond *Octopussy*. The former has interchangeable parts; the latter looks as if made from the spare parts of other people's movies. It begins with an escapade whose climax in an airplane hangar is overly reminiscent of last summer's Clint Eastwood starrer, *Firefox*, and whose follow-up is the gag from *1941* where an airplane refuels at a gas station. Later, an octopus wraps itself around a character's face just as the creature in *Alien* did. Etc. This kind of recycled trash (or maybe laundered money would be a more apt comparison) immediately makes the film look dated. So does the attitude toward women that these Ian Fleming stories from the fifties continue to perpetuate in the eighties.

Perhaps *Twilight Zone* gives us the final score for the summer. It is of course a sequel too, as it acknowledges by having four separate stories each the length of one episode from the original TV show. Of the four, only one — the last, directed by George Miller and starring John Lithgow — is worth seeing. This is about the same average that the summer schedule as a whole bats: .250. In that final episode (based, I believe, on one of the TV programs), Lithgow plays a white-knuckle flier who hallucinates goblins on the airplane's wing. Or are they hallucinations? Whatever they are, they show more personality in one take than some characters do in an entire movie. The other three episodes are, I'm afraid, truer to the summer's form. Their plots seem as arbitrary, as listless and purposeless, as the anthology film that contains them. Like other summer fare, these flashbacks from the *Zone* are stories whose time has come, and gone.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

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C. W. Pratt

Fibonacci Sequence

Stars,
as
we see
them at least,
refuse to keep their
distances, prefer company,
declare themselves chairs, bears, dippers, sweet milky highways.
So the hermit is sustained, isn't he, in dark privacy by the invisible
strings by which he dangles from the high hand of his God?
So many bees stinging night's flesh!
The passion of all
singleness
to keep
in
touch.

Anne Porter

From Denver to Albuquerque

Green is the bride of water, we see them always together
Along gold-bearing creeks in these high western mountains.
Waves of rock surge above us to bare inaccessible heights
Stained with their lofty grape-blue shadows,
While bluebells, coral bells and wild white poppies
Bloom fearless on the ledges.

Next we look down into a small ravine
Brimmed with eddying swallows,
And pass a few wire crosses twined with plastic flowers
Set in a mountain graveyard under tawny cliffs.
We come out over a valley dense with trailers,
where suddenly the showers fuse with sunlight
And a frail rainbow shines.

Then we stop at a gas-pump in an adobe town
Where the young men are drinking beer and talking
Around a broken car.
On the grimy wall of the washroom someone has printed:
LOVE IS AMONG US.

Here a blind Indian with whitened eyes
Climbs into the bus,
And after him a woman, sister, mistress, wife,
They alone know.
They share the meal they brought with them
And fall asleep in one another's arms.

As we cross the Rockies and Sangre de Cristo mountains
Wary or drugged or sleeping,
To each of us in our sprawling disarray
Out of the stabbed heart of the mountain-maker
A freshet pours.

William C. Hilton

Lines of Parting

The geometry of poets simply won't do;
Collapses in Euclidian theorem
And addled proofs.
Fine for triangles, circles,
Losses running only from here to there,
But the edges of the world crack
In friendship's end;
Time curves around love's dying
And poets disappear in
The universal expansion and
Lies of entropy old geometers didn't know.

I abandoned the lying literature;
Found one poet who got it right:
A Canadian goose on the cold river,
Barking lone eulogy
Into the morning sun for a dead mate;
Barking only at some part
Of a design it knew itself
To be no more a part of.

Nancy G. Westerfield

Tabula Rasa

Your own name still attaches to you,
Is here charted at the head of your hospital
Bed, though this evening you respond to it
Slowly, as your way to the outside
Begins to erase, along with notions
Of time and space, weather, our
Workaday lives. "I'm dull," you say
Self-deprecatingly, thin hands laced, arms
Addicted to morphine. Your skull, shaved,
And unshaven beard tell us the growth
Of what inside your forcecupped eyes listens
Instead of you, gradually erasing our names
And kinship, confusing our faces, your past.
How you wanted out of this body's house
When it began to crumble and burn
With you in it! but no well-wishing
Salvaged you. Now we sit awkwardly
Bedside, not knowing how to make love understood
By the thing that erases you to all but its pain,
The white slate, unwritten, that has taken your place.

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AN EFFORT 'TO CLEAR THE DECKS'

Michael Novak's Confession

JOHN GARVEY

I ONCE MET a priest who said that it was a matter of indifference if Jesus really rose from the dead or not; he was at the same time an ardent defender of the doctrine of papal infallibility. I was intrigued: I had met, at last, someone who was precisely my opposite, doctrinally, and it is rare to find something so neat and symmetrical as a precise opposite. The clarity was beguiling, and I was sorry when our conversation ended. I was sure the symmetry would have continued, if pursued.

Ordinary liberal and conservative labels don't apply very neatly to people who try to think with any deep care about their faith. This is true of Michael Novak, whose new book *Confession of a Catholic* (Harper & Row, $12.95) is offered "to clear the decks. I want an account of my faith, written in the presence of God, which can be sized up by myself and others. A public person owes his readers as much." He points out that each such accounting will be different from all the others; it takes the millions of lives of Christians to reflect the fullness of God's presence in humanity. Novak is good at revealing this uniqueness in his own thought and its development. For example, he offers a careful and conservative defense of his dissent from the papal teaching on birth control. He is not very good at understanding that a similar sympathy for others and for points of view which vary from his own might be as essential a part of the fullness of Christian vision as the narrow, but not unfruitful position he starts to stake out here, one which he calls "neoliberal Catholicism."

The book is divided into two sections, the first a reflection on the articles of the Nicene Creed, the second a criticism of the post-Vatican II Catholic church. One would expect the first to be a quiet, meditative work, more philosophical than polemical in tone, and the second to deal directly in controversy. But the first part of the book, though it does indeed contain reflective writing, some of it quite good, is every bit as polemical as the second. Novak, public man that he is, can't stay away from the fray for long. He is like a man with a grievance he simply can't forget, who begins every topic of conversation reasonably, with charm, grace, wit, and intelligence; then at a certain point his jaw is set, his fists clench, he gets a wild look in his eye and returns to the old wound until, passion spent, he clears his throat and relaxes into reason once again.

Novak says that *Confession of a Catholic* contains "my *Orthodoxy*, not quite my *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*." He really should be careful, because this invites comparisons of Novak's prose to Chesterton's and, in a deflected sort of way, to Newman's. One can't imagine either Chesterton or Newman coming up with a sentence like "As if with a cathode light, the media are suffused with rebellion." Then there is this sort of generalization: "Idealistic knowledge is an attempt to become superior to the human race. Genuine knowledge is an attempt to gain humble realism. Idealistic knowledge commonly expresses itself as rage. Genuine knowledge commonly expresses itself as reconciliation and quiet determination. To the modern idealist, reconciliation seems like surrender. To the humble seeker after truth, reconciliation is a start along the way of sound and solid progress."

Who is this meant to describe? The genuine, humble truth-seekers are plainly meant to be Novak and his anti-gnostic friends (more on this in a minute), but little is really pinned down with any concrete example. The most outrageous examples of liberal Catholic thought are taken from the Catholic charismatic writer Ralph Martin, who is not himself very careful about sources.

Novak is at his worst when he is on the attack, and at his best when he is most reflective. For example, a sensitive chapter on the Holy Spirit is followed a few chapters later by what might have been an equally perceptive meditation on the catholicity of the church. Instead, Novak opens with an attack on those who "desire the Catholic church to be a 'peace church.' They wish the church to be 'prophetic.' They wish it to conduct itself like a sect, excommunicating those who do not share its 'principles of peace.' "

Who are these people? No particular example is cited. There may indeed be such people in the peace movement, but they are hardly the majority. To point to the extreme is no more fair than it would be to charge that all conservative Catholics are Fatima cultists or closet members of Opus Dei. It is easier to accuse your opponents of self-righteousness than it is to deal in detail with their ideas. There is rarely an attributed statement; more frequently Novak relies on a caricature of the beliefs which diverge from his own. Where he does attribute, the attribution is sometimes not guilty of saying what Novak claims it does. "One of the sins of developed societies, we are told, is that they 'privatize' religion, and one of the virtues of political revolutions of the socialist type is that they once again reinstate 'social' life." There is a footnote following the reference to privatized religion. It refers to Bishop Roger Mahoney's March 12, 1982 *Commonweal* article, "The Catholic Conscience and Nuclear War." The statement cited by Novak is, "As an American bishop, I deeply respect our nation's tradition of the separation of church and state. I would deplore, however, any attempt to turn this legitimate separation

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into a separation of church from society or into a privatization of religion that would divorce our faith and hope from public concerns and crucial moral questions that face us all as citizens." Does Novak really disagree with this? Is the church wrong to insert itself into public debate on issues as diverse as slavery, abortion, or the rights of workers? Of course he doesn't disagree with what Mahoney actually said, only with the more totalitarian sentiment in the sentence which uses Mahoney's quote as its mooring, though unfairly.

Throughout the book Novak contrasts his own variety of Catholicism with what he calls "gnosticism," something which is at work in feminism, the peace movement, and socialism. The gnostic tag is borrowed from Eric Voegelin, and although it is used liberally throughout the book its meaning is defined only on page 195, very close to the end. Some of the definition does indeed work for various left-wing attitudes, but it is on the whole too broad. And it must be remembered that historically the church condemned gnosticism for two primary reasons: one was that gnosticism rejected the goodness of creation; the other was its belief that particular knowledge and insight saves us, and not God's mercy and love. Other aspects of gnostic thought were more or less acceptable and were even echoed in the teaching of some church fathers, who referred to "Christian gnosis" and who, like the gnostics, believed that the goal of Christian life is the thorough transformation of the human being. Ethical activity and doctrinal orthodoxy are only the beginning of Christian life, not its goal.

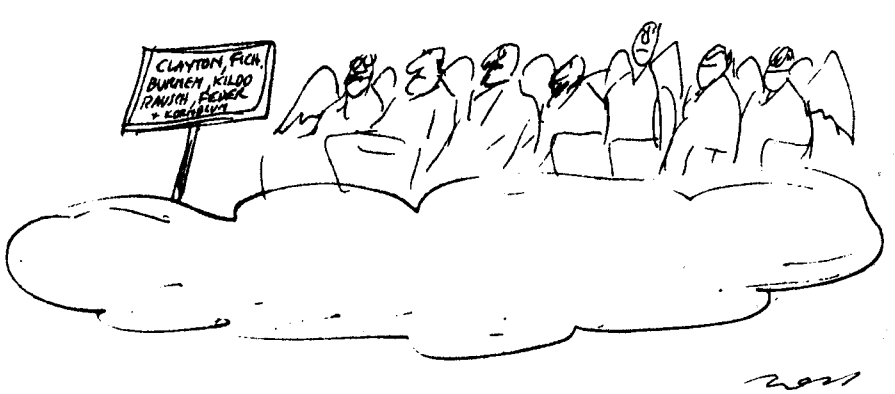
Novak does admit that gnosticism, as defined by Voegelin, can also operate in the sort of anti-Communism which is common in Latin America, but he hurries by this insight, perhaps because other right-wing targets might present themselves and the enemy, after all, is the left. (The Manichean nature of Reagan's claim that the Soviet Union is the source of all evil in the modern world is more gnostic than anything to be found on the left, short of Shining Path's mad reading of reality.)

At any rate, this definition of gnosticism is broader than the church's. The way Novak uses it, one must believe not only that creation is good but also that human institutions are good. To a certain extent this is true: the family, for example, has something essentially fleshy about it and is good. But when the phrase "human institutions" is allowed to cover too much territory, when one must say that because the family and multinational corporations are institutions they are therefore good, so that to call a multinational evil is to be gnostic — this is going much farther than Christian orthodoxy ever did. Trees, sexuality, families, animals, and stars are part of the created order in a way which armies, political parties, and ideologies are not. I am not arguing here that multinationals, parties, or any other structures are necessarily evil things; I am arguing that to call an existing structure evil is not necessarily gnostic in a Christian sense. Novak says that "the Catholic spirit does not hold that this world or its institutions are depraved"; but to claim goodness so broadly for human institutions is not necessarily Catholic orthodoxy.

Confession of a Catholic shows signs of having been written and edited on the run. There are repetitions — we are told more than once how appropriate it is that Sebastian is the patron saint of writers — and in the otherwise careful chapter on the Holy Spirit there is an important historical problem. Novak speaks of the fact that the Council of Nicaea used philosophical sources which were not derived from scripture. "We arrive, then," he writes, "at the analogy chosen by Nicaea. The Holy Spirit *proceeds from* the Father and the Son. Consider the way in which insight proceeds from an inquiring mind, the way a concept proceeds from an insight, the way love and joy proceed from a verified insight." He goes on for several paragraphs, expanding the idea that Nicaea's bishops did something significant when they offered us this definition. The problem is, they didn't offer it. The Fathers of Nicaea spoke of "The Holy Spirit, who proceeds from the Father." This was simply a development of the language to be found in the gospel of John. The addition of the words "and the Son" came from Charlemagne's theologians and was inserted by the West into the creed, unilaterally, long after Nicaea, an insertion which became a point of doctrinal friction between the Eastern and Western churches. Novak or an editor must have caught this, because pages later there is a parenthetical aside to the effect that the *filioque* was a medieval Western addition to the creed; but this has the effect of being tacked on, after a point has been made about Nicaea's genius in declaring what it did not, in fact, declare.

This carelessness is typical of the book, especially in its most polemical moments. Sometimes it is not clear that Novak distinguishes much moral difference between social democrats and the Pol Pot regime; at other times he is more generous. Although he considers the first part of the book the more important, it is more uneven and less satisfying than the shorter second section, where Novak is straightforwardly on the attack.

The carelessness is a shame, because when Novak is good he is very good. I have mentioned the chapter on the Holy Spirit. It contains, among other good



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things, a very sensitive treatment of the relationship between Christianity and Judaism. In reflecting on masculine language applied to God Novak is careful, if not persuasive at all times, and some of what he has to say is genuinely provocative.

There are, scattered throughout the book, illuminating insights into the movement of faith, and the painful depths of self-knowledge; there are good asides on marriage, and good things about the communal nature of Catholicism: "For Kierkegaard the true hero of religion is without support, a lonely knight of faith, noble in his solitariness, who leaps into the darkness in the heroic splendor of isolation. Kierkegaard may not have known how great a relief such faith would be to those who believe that God is to be found in the bored faces in the pews around him, in the dreadful sermons endured without end, in the silly romanticism of secular sentiments paraded as Christian faith. The lonely hero in isolation has it easy." Shouldn't that be "in the pews around them"? Never mind; the point is decent enough. In commenting on the banality of modern church music, Novak writes, "The old hymns to Mary used to recall, at least, that she had seven swords through her heart. Country music has more sadness in it than much parish hymnody today."

Novak also raises some important questions about liberation theology, the need for an appreciation of the Catholic intellectual tradition which preceded Vatican II, the banality of our liturgy, and many other issues. When he deals with them fairly and well, he offers the beginning of a conservative (or neoliberal, if you will) critique of current church fashion. We need that sort of thinking, particularly those of us most inclined to disagree with it. There are moments of it here, but only moments. Good points are begun, but before they can be developed they fall into rhetoric, peevishness, and vague complaining. "One notes that such intellectuals seldom praise women as *women*, but only those who hold the proper opinions: not Margaret Thatcher, or Jeane Kirkpatrick, or Phyllis Schlafly." But when are men or women praised simply as men, or women? I know what he is trying to say here, I think, but he doesn't say it.

A final complaint: conservative thinkers over the years have grown so used to feeling embattled that they can't get out of the habit. Here, as in the writing of James Hitchcock, there is almost an assumption that the church has been delivered into the hands of the barbarians, and that the left is in control not only of the church but of the major institutions of society as well. It may be interesting to think of oneself as part of a faithful remnant, but if this book were to be discovered by a future archaeologist with no other record of the time, he would have no way of knowing that most major Catholic theologians are not Marxist or even Marxist sympathizers, or that with the exception of the nuclear issue and the Catholic attitude towards capitalism (which has always been qualifiedly negative) most bishops would probably agree with Mr. Novak about most of the topics covered here, or that the reigning pope is one of the most conservative popes the church has had since Pius IX. With Reagan in the White House and John Paul II in the Vatican, it is hard to find the pose of the conservative as the embattled keeper of a dying flame a credible one.

Books: THROUGH ROSE-TINTED GLASSES

CATHOLICS AND RADICALS

THE ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC TRADE UNIONISTS AND THE AMERICAN LABOR MOVEMENT FROM DEPRESSION TO COLD WAR

Douglas Seaton

Bucknell University Press, $28.50, 269 pp.

John C. Cort

EARLY in the century Werner Sombart gave us the most memorable explanation of why socialism has not become a major force in the USA. Contemplating the fact that the American worker then consumed almost three times as much bread and meat, and four times as much sugar, as a German worker, Sombart concluded, "On the reefs of roast beef and apple pie socialistic utopias of every sort are sent to their doom."

Other explanations have followed. The latest one comes from Douglas Seaton's book, *Catholics and Radicals*.

"Catholic influence," he writes, "was of crucial importance in the consolidation of conservative leadership, policies and practices in the industrial unions that emerged from the upheavals of the 1930s." He says that these industrial unions, organized by John L. Lewis and friends into the CIO, were the main hope of radicalizing the labor movement and that the spearhead of radical element was the Communist party. On the conservative side, according to Seaton's script, the core group was the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists (ACTU). The victory of ACTU over the CP in the years 1937-50 therefore spelled the doom of American radicalism and/or socialism.

(Continued on page 442)

A BETTER WORLD

THE GREAT SCHISM: STALINISM AND THE AMERICAN INTELLECTUALS

William L. O'Neill

Simon & Schuster, $17.95, 447 pp.

Ronald Radosh

NEARLY forty years ago, George Orwell wrote that he was convinced that the "destruction of the Soviet myth was essential if we wanted a revival of the socialist movement." William L. O'Neill addresses himself to the legacy left the intellectual community in the United States by those of its members who perpetrated that myth — some of them with conscious awareness of their duplicity; others while holding blinders pulled well over their eyes. It is salutary to be reminded how so many of the most

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erudite and learned American intellectuals not only gave the Soviet Union every benefit of the doubt — if they even admitted to having doubts — but offered the most grotesque rationales on behalf of despicable and indefensible behavior.

The list of fellow-travelers is long. It includes writers like Upton Sinclair, the old 1912-era progressive Raymond Robins, the political scientist Frederick L. Schuman, liberal cold warrior Max Lerner, and the humanist philosopher Corliss Lamont. They often contradicted each other, at times even themselves; but what they held in common was the constant presentation of new arguments to endorse the Soviet Union. In dissecting their arguments, William O'Neill wields a scalpel that cuts to the bone.

Of course, these intellectuals did not hold power, did little to aid the effectiveness of Soviet foreign policy; and at times, the anti-Stalinist intellectuals overshot their mark when they counterattacked. Thus *Partisan Review* exaggerated in the early Cold War when it accused Stalin's defenders of being guilty of "shooting democrats of every shade and color." Actually, as O'Neill points out, the sin of the intellectuals was of a different caliber—if just as inexcusable. What was at stake, O'Neill writes, was the "integrity of intellectual life." The intellectuals were important not because they influenced the policy-makers, but "because they helped erect the intellectual scaffolding of their time."

That scaffolding, O'Neill says, is still somewhat rickety. It is in his treatment of matters of contemporary import that O'Neill's book will be controversial, because he insists on challenging the common wisdom of the left on three major areas — its view of the blacklist in the entertainment industry; its treatment of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom in the 1950's, and its overall hostility to forthright expressions of anti-Communism. While in this sense *Commonweal* and its audience cannot very well be placed among the "left," O'Neill's book may nonetheless hold a special interest for the readership of a magazine that was passionately involved in the disputes of the McCarthy period and in the problem of defining intellectual responsibility in politics. O'Neill's book may also shed light on current debates about Communism and anti-Communism.

Unlike Christopher Lasch, who viewed the intellectuals of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom(ACCF) as handmaidens of the corporate state and as unabashed McCarthyites, O'Neill attempts a more tempered estimate. He views them as a group whose attitude was strikingly similar to those exemplary anti-anti-communists gathered around Freda Kirchwey's *Nation*. Inversely, O'Neill puts it, the ACCF group exemplified anti-anti-McCarthyism. Yet, he argues, it is wrong to smear the entire group for the sins of its extreme hard-liners. He points to the anti-McCarthy views of ACCF members like Dwight Macdonald, Richard Rovere, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., and Sidney Hook as his proof.

Those of the ACCF intellectuals who were soft on McCarthy, like Sol Stein and Max Eastman, O'Neill treats as mirror images of the fellow-travelers who were soft on Stalin. "Many Committee members would admit that McCarthy had defects, but not enough to matter."

O'Neill is on less firm ground when he concludes that "despite lapses of judgment and taste," the ACCF record "was better than critics have been willing to admit." In reaching that judgment, O'Neill makes that element of the anti-Communist liberal movement look better than it actually was. Certainly, the late journalist Richard Rovere *was* anti-McCarthy. But he and others like him, as Mary McAuliffe has argued, were willing until 1954 "to accept right-wing fanaticism from former radicals" in order to maintain an anti-Communist united front. Moreover, Rovere gave his support to the Smith Act, as well as the McCarran Internal Security Act. Rovere even praised the horrendous internment provision in which, to use his words, "all Communists known to the F.B.I." would be rounded up in case of a national emergency. This measure, he had argued, was "sound and necessary." Rovere readily admitted it was a gross violation of traditional civil liberties, but he argued that the step was based on "the logic of politics" and met the test of a "clear and present danger."

Indeed, Rovere even wrote that he had no objection "to the test of guilt by association" as a mechanism for determining security risks, as long as such tests were "soberly applied." With such illogic offered by the very best of the ACCF intellectuals, Lasch's conclusion that the ACCF displayed a form of "modified McCarthyism" seems more convincing than the judgment reached by O'Neill.

O'Neill also does not sufficiently come to terms with the vengeance with which *The New Leader*, then a major spokesman for one wing of the anti-Stalinist liberal movement, carried out its campaign against Owen Lattimore — the China scholar who became one of McCarthy's major targets. Both that journal and columnist Granville Hicks continually chastised liberals who had defended Lattimore. He was worse than a spy — which is what McCarthy had branded him — he was a "Lit Ag" (literary agent) of the Kremlin, who sought to fashion a pro-Soviet foreign policy.

O'Neill distinguishes between the "progressive" views of the USSR and of China. The same people who offered the same stale apologias for Stalin, he points out, were actually right in their analysis of events unfolding in China. Lattimore, for one, argued early in the game that Chinese and Russian Communism did not have to march together hand in hand. On all the main issues involving Asia, Lattimore was, O'Neill writes, "re-

(Continued on page 442)

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Religious booknotes

Pluralism, peace, & social justice

Mary Gerhart

"TO DEAL adequately with the diversity of other faiths," Christians need to "face their own inner diversity." This was how Gerald Anderson and Thomas Stransky summarized contemporary ecumenical prospects in their introduction to a collection of papers *(Christ's Lordship and Religious Pluralism)* from a 1979 consultation held at Union Theological Seminary in Richmond. Some recent titles link the question of pluralism to the issues of social justice and peace.

***Christians in Ulster, 1968-1980**, by Eric Gallagher and Stanley Worrall, Oxford University Press, 1982, $19.95, cloth, 241 pp., index.*

Two books describe how religious diversity is inextricably entangled in social-political situations. *Christians in Ulster, 1968-1980* chronicles the peace efforts of Irish religious leaders of all denominations and attempts to account for the success and failure of each effort. By 1968 reactionaries led by Ian Paisley had been aroused by the much-publicized ecumenism developing among and within Protestant and Catholic communities. In the face of the Paisley opposition, however, neither Catholic nor Protestant ecumenical leaders could be sure of support from within their own constituencies. The most volatile episodes — the activities of the Orange Order, the publication of the Catholic Directory on Mixed Marriages, the secession of Presbyterians from the World Council of Churches — are analyzed for their larger effects in Irish history. The authors, Methodist churchmen who participated in the struggle to curb violence in Northern Ireland, believe that a "business as usual" attitude (if that attitude were even possible to maintain) is not sufficient. They ask what will be the effect of "the absence of fellowship among Christians, let alone [the presence of] suspicion and division" on the substance of faith itself.

Another book which studies the politicization of religion, here seen in the Centre Party in Germany before 1914, is *Class, Religion and Local Politics in Wilhelmine Germany* by David Blackbourne. From the time of the founding of the Centre Party as a "defensive reaction on the part of German Catholics faced with a minority position in the newly-unified Reich" to its "zig-zag" course into the hands of the army in 1914, the party mirrored the Reich's own instability. Blackbourne shows that Catholic principles informed some but by no means all the positions adopted by the Centre and that it sometimes opposed both the Catholic hierarchy and the government. Nor was the party uniformly successful in reconciling the opposed interests of its constituents, many of whom voted with it only occasionally. Notwithstanding some lapses, such as in the use of the term, "Catholic backwardness," the book illuminates the complexity and the ambiguity of religiously informed political organizations.

***Class, Religion and Local Politics in Wilhelmine Germany: The Centre Party in Wurttemberg before 1914**, by David Blackbourne, Yale University Press, 1980, $25.00, cloth, 267 pp., index.*

A book of quite different tenor and much larger scope, *Living Theology in Asia* covers twelve Asian countries which have national Christian traditions. Nevertheless, the effect of what the editor, John C. England, refers to as "rice roots" theology vividly reminds us that religious tolerance remains largely unachieved. Recent developments, he thinks, have served to multiply "the brutal inequalities already present in Asian societies." Twelve countries (or regions) are each represented in three articles of differing perspective (including that of a political prisoner). An editor's summary of historical events which have shaped the theological tradition of each country provides a helpful introduction to each chapter. Startlingly fresh treatments of traditional images and concepts, such as those of "God's suffering in the human struggle" and the "first fruits" of the new humanity make this book important for a current view of Asian Christianity. All major denominations are represented.

***Living Theology in Asia**, ed. by John C. England, Orbis, 1982, $9.95, paper, 242 pp.*

"What is religion good for within class struggles?" asks Otto Maduro. His *Religion and Social Conflicts* is a self-critical, social-scientific-philosophical response to that question as it pertains to Latin American societies. In her introduction to this English translation, Marie Augusta Neal calls the book a "splendid assignment . . . for those who wonder how a Marxist analysis can be consistently and informatively applied to the Latin American situation and still not treat the reality of Christianity as purely epiphenomenal." The keynote of Maduro's book is the recognition of

***Religion and Social Conflicts**, by Otto Maduro, Orbis, 1982, $8.95, paper, 161 pp.*

MARY GERHART *teaches hermeneutics, religion, and literature at Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva, New York.*

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complexity — in the multiple etymologies of religion, in the relations between sociologies of religion and sociology in general, in and among the different Latin American countries. His analysis is applied to religious interest, religious production, and the structuring of religious power. He concludes by affirming the "potential revolutionary function of

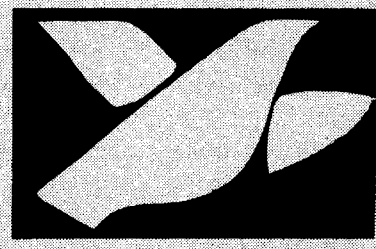
***Education for Peace and Justice**, ed. by Padraic O'Hare, Harper & Row, 1983, $9.95, paper, 234 pp.*

church systems." Maduro, professor of philosophy at the University of the Andes in Venezuela, has taught at the University of Notre Dame, and is the author of two books on the foundations of social thought.

People may cry routinely for social justice today, but the concept and the term originated only in the late nineteenth century — this we learn in *Education for Peace and Justice*, edited by Padraic O'Hare. This book reflects the range which the genre "religious education theory" is beginning to have in this country and recognizes the foundational, educational, and ministerial questions in the issue of social justice. Although the collection is uneven, some essays such as that of Russell Butkus on John Dewey's and Paulo Freire's models of education for peace and social justice, Margaret Harris on models and education for priesthood, Gabriel Moran on the meaning of social reform, are provocative.

The foundational aspects of pluralism are addressed in the Concilium issue, *Is Being Human a Criterion of Being Christian?*, edited by Jean-Pierre Jossua and Claude Geffré. Although it is puzzling that the editors ignore feminist concerns on this issue — the contributors, all male, are untouched, for example, by efforts to reform gender-biased language — several of the articles raise important questions. Jean Ladrière's "On the Notion of Criterion," asks how one constructs a concept of the human, starting from either an empirical or reflective basis. Joseph Comblin's "Humanity and the Liberation of the Oppressed" questions the uncritical association between "humanism" and middle-class understandings of "humanity." One of the most valuable articles ("Human Rights and Christian Rights" by Norbert Greinacher) distinguishes between human and Christian rights by reviewing the implications of two documents in which each kind of right is made explicit: the United Nations' "General Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948" and

***Is Being Human a Criterion of Being Christian ?** edited by Jean-Pierre Jossua and Claude Geffre, Seabury Press, 1982, $6.95, paper, 83 pp.*



the "Founding Declaration of the Committee for the Defense of Christian Rights in the Church of 19 December 1979."

Cognizant of the need to reconstruct what was traditionally known as the "interior life," Francis X. Meehan links social justice to spirituality in *A Contemporary Social Spirituality*. He calls for new, nonprivatized, pastoral-theological models to reflect the growing but not entirely new sense that authentic spirituality includes the intrapersonal, the interpersonal, and the structural. The image of the church as a great ship making a slow turn in deep waters conveys Meehan's sense that some course-correction is occurring in the alignment of spirituality with social concerns. Yet his applications sometimes founder, for example, in his unelaborated distinction between the involvement of clergy and religious in "partisan politics" or in "clear protest against concrete injustice."

***A Contemporary Social Spirituality**, by Francis X. Meehan, Orbis, 1982, $6.95, paper, 133 pp.*

A book which belongs also and obviously to the genre of spiritual praxis but which makes brilliantly clear the reason for Christians to "be aware of their own diversity" is Sebastian Moore's *The Inner Loneliness*. The publishers present Moore as "a modern master who has been nurtured on the contemplative wisdom of the patristic and scholastic wisdom." Just as important is the influence of the Latin American liberation theologian, Jon Sobrino. Moore attributes the "marked change in direction" from his three previous books, a change he regards as "the most fruitful theological change of direction" he has ever made, to Sobrino's work. *The Inner Loneliness* is informed by the thought of such diverse figures as Nietzsche, Feuerbach, Aquinas, and contemporary transpersonal psychologists. The focus of the book is on the basic (and wishful) desire that God exist. The author understands himself to have " 'done a Feuerbach,' not with sublime ideas like justice, mercy, love, understanding, but with the core-idea of self-love and the desire it generates 'to be for.' "

***The Inner Loneliness**, by Sebastian Moore, Crossroad, 1982, $9.95, paper, 120 pp.*

With Moore's appropriation of Latin American theological reflection, we come full circle. What can we expect from a recognition of our "own inner diversity"? Arrived at honestly and carefully, the recognition can bring about an increase in understanding that is at once critical and inclusive. In the long run, such understanding is the only sound basis for peace.

MARY GERHART

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(Continued from page 439)
markably on target" and even "prophetic" when writing about Vietnam. The problem was that men like Lattimore never gave up their illusions about Russia, and many of the anti-Stalinist left — like Sidney Hook — responded to McCarthy's false smear with satisfaction that one of their old enemies was finally getting torn down. They simply could not forgive Lattimore for his unrepudiated defense, in the mid-thirties, of Stalin's purge trials. *The New Leader* therefore gleefully joined McCarthy in backing a purge from State of the old China hands.

O'Neill also strains the evidence when he seeks to find common ground between Sidney Hook's formula for opposing the right of Communists to teach in universities — "Heresy, Yes; Conspiracy, No" — and Irving Howe's critique of Hook's argument, a dissection that O'Neill admirably summarizes. O'Neill's conclusion that "as a practical matter Hook and Howe were close enough," seems off base, concentrating too much on abstract principles and less on the particular emphasis which in fact composed a great gulf between two men ostensibly on the democratic left.

The area that will produce most of the controversy surrounding O'Neill's book, however, is his analysis of the blacklist years. O'Neill agrees that it was both wrong and vindictive to conduct punitive investigations of legal political activities, and to force people to lose their jobs because of their past activities. The Communists were victims who were hurt more than any of those individuals they had once recruited. Yet, he writes that "Stalinism was an evil all the same, and the occasion for what followed." The existence of the Hollywood Communists as McCarthy-era victims, he argues, "does not absolve show-business Stalinists of political sin."

Thus O'Neill concentrates on dissecting the views of those who have sought to glamorize the victims. His prime target is *Nation* editor Victor Navasky, whose *Naming Names* was heralded in the intellectual and show-business community as a work that successfully put the blacklist experience in a moral perspective. Navasky praised those who refused to talk before HUAC. O'Neill argues instead that it is hardly Red-baiting to call a Communist a Communist, or to conclude that Communists called before HUAC might have done better to own up to their real beliefs and admit them, rather than to represent "themselves as simple liberals and patriots."

Navasky's real purpose in writing his book, O'Neill claims, was not simply to attack those who informed. Rather, it was "to discredit anti-Communism by showing the moral degradation to which it led."

> To Navasky it was bad to call a Communist a Communist because that was what witch-hunters did, because it degraded a person to be so characterized, and finally, because it denied the person a right [that] ought to be defended, that being the right not to be correctly identified. Had this standard been widely upheld it would have been very difficult indeed to speak plainly about Communists or Communist-sponsored activities, which is what progressives wanted — and still want, it would seem.

O'Neill is adamant that the *Nation* has been wrong not to take its share of the blame for allowing McCarthyism to triumph — since it never acknowledged the very real evils of Stalinism. Its position, he argues, is akin to "a homeowner refusing to assign any responsibility to the fire in the house for the damage done by firemen." Thus, he says it is an error to deal with the blacklist years by simply praising those who refused to testify before HUAC and by condemning those who did. O'Neill calls it simplistic to see informing as "the only sin and silence the only virtue."

"What the nation required," he writes, "was people who were not prevented from telling the truth by childhood misconceptions" that an honest declaration branded one a squealer. Silence, he puts it, was the real "friends of McCarthyism, not the enemy as progressives believed."

All of this will cause consternation among those O'Neill is criticizing or those still subject to fellow-traveling. They will try to discredit O'Neill's analysis by dubbing him a neo-conservative. Careful readers will note that O'Neill stresses that America desperately needs a "left wing of the proper kind," i.e., one that discards a crude anti-Americanism and that regards the well-being of the United States as a legitimate concern.

All of William L. O'Neill's judgments are not equally valid. At times he overstates his case, and at other times fails to make critical distinctions among the group of anti-Stalinist liberals whose past views he discusses. Nevertheless, any errors of omission and faulty judgments are those of a thinker with the courage to challenge conventional shibboleths. "When intellectuals abandon their calling and join the zealots," O'Neill concludes, "they give up a role they alone can play." O'Neill asks that this role be maintained in our intellectual life. He performs it most ably himself.

The ACTU & Communism (cont.)

(Continued from page 438)
The explanation is fascinating because I was one of the founders of the ACTU, its first executive secretary, for a number of years in the thirties and forties managing editor of its newspaper, and for many more a regular columnist. I am therefore biased. Douglas Seaton also seems to be biased. From the start his sympathies are with the CP and his antipathies with the Catholics because Catholics are by definition conservatives, that is, "those who generally support the status quo with respect to private property, management prerogatives, and power arrangements in American society." In the labor movement they "draw the line at independent political activity by labor, expropriation or nationalization of property, transfer of management or personnel decisions to labor, class conflict, and the general objectives of the radicals." The radicals are for all these things plus "an increasing share of wealth for labor and ultimately

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socialism as a political, social, and economic system."

The Communists during the thirties were in Seaton's view the quintessential radicals. In addition "the prestige the Communists derived from the example of the Soviet Union, unaffected as it was by the worldwide depression, was considerable." He does not consider other judgments of the Soviet Union during the worldwide depression. For example, Leszek Kolakowski in *Main Currents of Marxism*: "The mass collectivization of Soviet agriculture [was] probably the most massive warlike operation ever conducted by a state against its own citizens . . . Hundreds of thousands, and finally millions of peasants . . . were deported to Siberia or other desolate areas; desperate revolts in the villages were bloodily suppressed by the army and police, and the country sank into chaos, starvation, and misery."

ACTU tended to accept judgments like the latter rather than the former. It should therefore come as no surprise that we opposed Stalinist efforts to gain control of American unions and bend them to the service of Soviet foreign policy. Anti-Communism is no longer as fashionable as it once was. Today picking on Communists in America is like big kids picking on little kids. They are too weak to be taken seriously. Not so in the thirties and forties. In 1939 over 90,000 marched with them in New York City. At one point in the forties they controlled unions with well over one million members in some of the most strategic industries. They were big kids then and by no means averse to picking on little kids. In any case I for one have no apologies to offer for opposing them.

Seaton's thesis is fascinating for more reasons than one. His claim that Catholicism and socialism are incompatible is based on better evidence than he can muster for his charges against the church and ACTU and is therefore believed by more of the Catholic faithful. Pius XI once wrote that "Christian socialism" was a contradiction in terms. The claim deserves serious consideration.

Early in his book Seaton singles out Msgr. John A. Ryan as a special target. Ryan was, and probably still is, the most impressive economist that the Catholic church has contributed to the American scene. He was also director of the Social Action Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference during the twenties, through the forties. Perhaps his most significant contribution was the Bishops' Program of Social Reconstruction in 1919, which James Carey, secretary of the CIO, once described as "a more radical program than that of the CIO." Although Ryan was never an ACTU chaplain, as Seaton indicates, we leaned heavily on him and Pius XI in putting together our own program.

Seaton writes that Monsignor Ryan's "ideas . . . demonstrate that, even at its most liberal, Catholic social doctrine was a consistent adaptation of the church's fundamental conservatism in social and economic matters." Ryan's theory of a just, living wage, Seaton claims, "defined a near-subsistence level wage as the just wage." Later on, Seaton spells out Ryan's wage as "sufficient to meet the needs of an average family for food, clothing, shelter, health care, recreation, social intercourse, religious obligations, education, organizational dues, taxes, insurance, utilities, culture, vacations, tobacco, alcohol, books and magazines as well as savings for accidents, ill health, and old age." This is Seaton's idea of "near-subsistence." He must be independently wealthy.

This kind of thing got me so stirred up that I went to the library and got out two of the Ryan books that Seaton cites: *Social Reconstruction*, which includes the full text of the 1919 Program, and *A Better Economic Order*, written in 1935, early in the New Deal, which eventually wrote into law most of Ryan's and the bishops' recommendations. The books confirm the belief of many that Ryan deserves rediscovery by current economists and social historians both in and out of the church. The books also provide excellent grounds for concluding exactly the opposite of what Seaton says about them.

As FOR the ACTU, Seaton is generous enough to concede that, having dedicated itself to promoting the Catholic program in 1937, it pursued a "progressive" policy for the first year of the existence, but then "abandoned" all progressive pretenses and made anti-Communism its first priority, which took "precedence over the fight for unionism and social justice itself."

This charge, that ACTU's purpose and principal activity was to fight Communism, has become a cliché of the Stalinist guide to American labor history and has even invaded the accounts of others on the non-Stalinist left. It appears, for example, in less anti-Catholic books like Neil Betten's *Catholic Activism and the Industrial Worker*, except that Betten gives ACTU about eight years of constructive activity before it "mainly fought Communist influence in the labor movement." When this libel first appeared I picked at random four issues of *The Labor Leader*, ACTU's national newspaper, which I was editing in the late forties and which was a reasonably accurate reflection of what we were doing and thinking at the time. These issues were published between November 1948 and March 1949, a period that fell within the time of most

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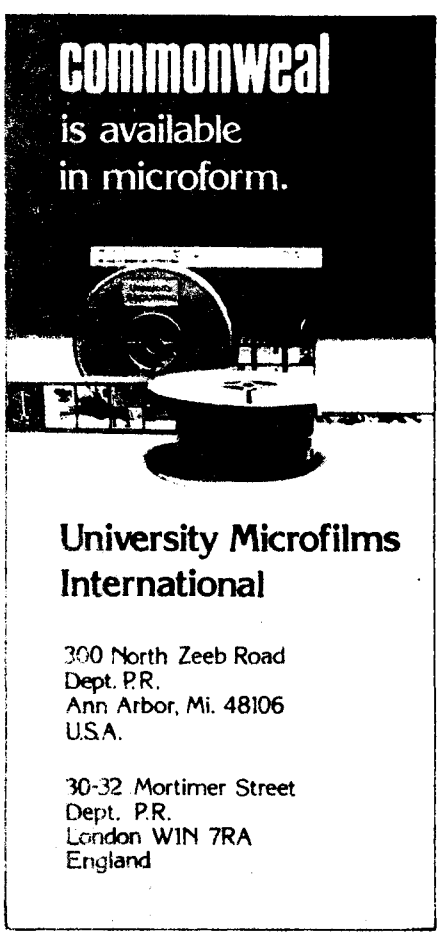
intense anti-Communist activity in the labor movement, leading up to the expulsion of eleven Stalinist unions from the CIO.

I measured the space devoted to anti-Communism or to reporting anti-Communist activity. It came to 6.4 percent of the total reading matter. Since this activity was probably the most newsworthy and significant thing happening in the American labor movement during those years, the thought occurs that we may have underplayed it.

Douglas Seaton, unlike Neil Betten, does attempt to substantiate the charge. He cites *The Labor Leader*, for June 8, 1938, and says that the issue devoted five of its ten articles to anti-Communist activity. A check of that issue reveals two editorials, six letters, and seventeen articles and/or news items. Of these *one* was a factual report of some anti-Stalinist activity by the president of the United Auto Workers. The longest article praised Harry Bridges's longshore union on the West Coast, "whether it is Communistic or not," because it had obtained better conditions than the racket-ridden union of Joe Ryan, the pious Catholic, on the East Coast. No other articles mentioned Communism.

So far, very poor evidence for Seaton's charge. But stay, one of the editorials criticized a new labor paper on the New York waterfront, favorable to Ryan's leadership, because only five of its articles dealt with non-Communist subjects while ten "assail the various activities of the CP, a slightly lopsided balance for a paper dedicated to 'the rights of the transport worker.' " So the editorial, at least, contains the figures "five" and "ten" — in reference however, to a surfeit of anti-Communist emphasis in *another* publication. Is that where Seaton picked up these figures? Could he have really read this issue and not realized that it, and its editorial explicitly, demonstrated exactly the opposite of what he was charging? Would it be unkind to label his handiwork five-and-ten scholarship?



OTHER INACCURACIES and false statements include the following:

1. *Seaton:* "Private property was inviolate in Catholic social doctrine."

Comment: See the material by Monsignor Ryan as well as the U.S. Bishops' Programs and Pius XI's *Quadragesimo Anno*. Also a *Labor Leader* editorial (September 18, 1944) summarizing a September 1, 1944, statement by Pius XII that "condemns as contrary to the rights of man 'capitalism' when it arrogates to itself unlimited right to property without any subordination to the common good." "No Catholic," the editor, Roger Larkin, continued, "can any longer claim that private property and capitalism are one and the same system. . . .The well-to-do will be angered by the words that say that the government should *intervene*, *regulate*, and even *expropriate* (with suitable indemnity) property that is harmful to the life of society" [emphasis in the original].

2. *Seaton:* "Each new [ACTU] member's faith and morals were inspected by the chaplain."

Comment: no evidence is advanced to support this laughable statement.

3. *Seaton:* "The Actists reserved their most dire threats of excommunication for 'renegade' Catholics" who supported left-wing leadership.

Comment: The evidence for this is one news story in one issue of *The Labor Leader* in 1949 that reported a decree of the Holy Office in Rome excommunicating Catholic members of the Italian Communist party.

4. *Seaton:* Father William Smith, S.J., was an ACTU chaplain and his Crown Heights Labor School in Brooklyn was affiliated with ACTU. Father Smith maintained that "every means and every ally had to be used in combatting [Communism]."

Comment: All three assertions are untrue, and the last one is a gross libel.

5. *Seaton:* "The strikes which the [ACTU] progressives had supported, while hard-fought in themselves, had often been terminated through mediation efforts by the ACTU or an affiliated churchman. . . . Participation in mediation suggested that even the ACTU's progressives tended to regard the organization as an agency of class harmony more than as a partisan and advocate of the workers."

Comment: The implications of the last sentence boggle the mind. Any effort to settle a strike, even though it be on the most victorious terms, disqualifies the settler as a "a partisan and advocate of the workers." Strikes, it seems, should last forever and no effort made to settle them by any true friend of labor.

6. *Seaton:* "No movement beyond the ranks of the ACTU ever materialized in behalf of the pope's plan" for Industry Councils.

Comment: This plan, adapted to American conditions by John Brophy and Phil Murray, president of the CIO, was unanimously approved by every CIO convention between 1941 and 1955, when the CIO merged with the AFL. In 1942 it was also praised by William Z. Foster, chairman of the Communist party, as "giving labor a real voice in war industry."

7. *Seaton:* The ACTU supported an AFL unity proposal "for dismemberment of the CIO unions among competing craft unions."

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Comment: Totally untrue. This is one of Seaton's more original and inventive false statements.

8. *Seaton:* For ACTU, "violence was absolutely intolerable . . . even in self-defense."

Comment: On several occasions I wrote exactly the opposite in *The Labor Leader*. For example: "In a detailed discussion in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* Msgr. John A. Ryan points out that the church does, however, admit the possibility of justifying . . . the use of force by labor. A few years ago Monsignor Ryan and other authorities made a case in Catholic ethics for the sit-down strike when used by men absolutely dependent on their jobs against an employer who could affort to pay a living wage and refused to do so." "Other authorities" included Bishop Gallagher of Detroit, Chancellor Hannon of the Pittsburgh diocese, and Father Raymond Miller, a Redemptorist theologian.

9. *Seaton:* The ACTU supported Franco in the Spanish civil war.

Comment: Some Actists favored the Loyalists, some Franco, and many, including most of the leaders, took a neutral position, like *Commonweal* and *The Catholic Worker*. We did oppose union resolutions in support of the Loyalists, holding that the issue did not belong in an American union meeting where it tended to divide rather than unite members.

10. *Seaton:* The ACTU proposed that Communists be forbidden membership in American unions.

Comment: Not true. I was once publicly excoriated by an official of the Utility Workers, CIO, for criticizing in *The Labor Leader* such a provision in that union's constitution. In 1949 we also printed a reproach of a Bridgeport local of the UE (United Electrical Workers) for expelling twenty-seven members for Communist affiliation.

11. *Seaton:* The New York Cemetery Strike of 1949 was "utterly lost"; Cardinal Spellman refused to "recognize [the strikers'] reconstituted union or rehire the members of the negotiating committee."

Comment: The cardinal reversed his previous position and did both. He also improved substantially the wage offer that was on the table at the start of the strike. The ACTU's solid support of this strike, shared in by all its chaplains, led to the termination of the cardinal's substantial contribution to our budget and proved once again that Seaton's thesis is one gigantic falsehood. Neither did the strike lead to ACTU's "precipitate decline" as Seaton claims. Ten years later ACTU was on front pages all over the country for the testimony of John McNiff and Norman DeWeaver before the Senate Labor Committee on racketeering in the labor movement and was praised by U.S. senators and labor journalists alike for its continuing work in behalf of rank-and-file members in unions that were racket-controlled.

Seaton's case for the proposition that Catholicism and socialism are incompatible has proven itself, I would hope, unworthy of serious consideration. We still face the statements of Pius XI: " 'Religious socialism,' 'Christian socialism' are expressions implying a contradiction in terms. No one can be at

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the same time a sincere Catholic and a true Socialist."

These sentences were written in 1931, when socialism in most countries was an almost exclusively Marxist ideology and placed its primary emphasis on nationalization of all production and distribution. In 1951, however, the Socialist International rewrote the definition of socialism as a pluralist view of society that emphasizes political and religious freedom, repudiates Communism and dictatorship as socialist alternatives, and welcomes a variety of economic options from private ownership of family farms and small- and medium-sized business to cooperatives to worker self-management and co-determination to public ownership. It thus became virtually indistinguishable from the proposals of John A. Ryan and the Bishops' Program of 1919.

The records of socialist parties in Western Europe, which have won power in virtually every country of that region at one time or another, have now confirmed that revision to the satisfaction, apparently, of the last four popes, none of whom has reaffirmed the harsh judgment of Pius XI. This conclusion was shared by Oswald von Nell-Breuning, the German Jesuit who drafted most of *Quadragesimo Anno*. In 1968 he declared that "the libertarian, democratic socialism of the present day has clearly ceased to be" the kind of socialism condemned by Leo XIII and Pius XI.

God of the Hill

RELIGION ON CAPITOL HILL

Peter L. Benson and Dorothy Williams

Harper & Row, $11.95, 209 pp.

Jim Castelli

JIMMY CARTER is a born-again Christian; so is Ronald Reagan. Teddy Kennedy is a Roman Catholic; so is Henry Hyde. Mark Hatfield is a Baptist; so is Jesse Helms. Rep. Paul Simon is a Lutheran; so is Ed Meese.

Pairings like that serve to reinforce the conventional wisdom of academia and the secular media that religion has no impact on politics. But that assumption is unacceptable to anyone with a working knowledge of what religion is all about or an unbiased observation of the political process.

Those of us who have been trying for years to get people to see the obvious — that religion and politics are intimately related — have powerful new ammunition in *Religion on Capitol Hill*, the result of research funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. It doesn't merely offer empirical evidence to support the claim that religion influences politics; it also explains why members of the same denomination can differ so dramatically in their approach to politics, confirming what many of us have long believed — "liberals and conservatives differ not in amount of religion but in kind."

The book is based on in-depth interviews conducted with a representative sample of eighty House and Senate members in the spring of 1980. Benson and Williams found that despite myths to the contrary, almost all members of Congress believe in God and practice their religion and that "Congress is at least as religious as the public," reflecting the same general beliefs as the population at large.

Religion on Capitol Hill also contains some real gems of new information. For example, those members of Congress who are by most measures the least religious tend to stand politically right of center; they are not the raving liberals. And while about 60 percent of the evangelical Christians in Congress are conservative, a surprising 40 percent are liberal; perhaps more interesting, "there are very few evangelicals who take a moderate political position."

But the heart of *Religion on Capitol Hill* is its breakdown of six different types of religious belief — independent of denomination — found among members of Congress and, presumably, among the general public. Based on an analysis of themes which came up in the extensive questioning, they divided members of Congress into these groups:

- Legalistic Religionists (15 percent) "place very high values on rules, boundaries, limits, guidelines, direction, and purpose."
- Integrated Religionists (14 percent) show a balance on all value scales studied and have tested their faith — their "religious beliefs work to liberate, to free them to speak and act. . . . God, not humankind, is their audience."
- Self-Concerned Religionists (29 percent) are similar in belief to the legalists but are "almost entirely concerned with the relationship between the believer and God."
- People-Concerned Religionists (10 percent) "believe intensely that religious belief ought to move out to action . . . and that an important focus of that action should be on responding to the needs of the oppressed and the have-nots of the world."
- Nontraditional Religionists (9 percent) are very close to people-concerned religionists, but have a much more symbolic, abstract sense of God.
- Nominal Religionists (22 percent) have maintained formal church ties, but have little enthusiasm for religion; Benson and Williams suspect they may maintain religious affiliation for social and political expedience.

When Benson and Williams examined the voting records of the members they interviewed according to conservative and liberal lobbies, they found that People-Concerned and Nontraditional Religionists were always the first and second most liberal, Legalistic and Self-Concerned Religionists were always the first and second most conservative; Integrated Religionists were always the third most liberal, Nominal Reli-

REVIEWERS

JOHN C. CORT, *co-editor of* Religious Socialism, *a quarterly newsletter, has worked for labor groups and anti-poverty agencies for most of his life.*

RONALD RADOSH, *a professor of history at Queens Community College, is the author of* Prophets on the Right.

JIM CASTELLI *is the author of* The Bishops and the Bomb: Waging Peace in a Nuclear Age *(Doubleday).*

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gionists always the fourth most liberal.

In some ways, these results only document what was already obvious; at the same time, it is rare that gut-level reactions are so perfectly mirrored in social science research. It would be fascinating to see research comparing the congressional representing of Legalistic Religionists, and so on, with that in the general population.

Several times in the book, Benson and Williams wrestle with the "chicken-and-egg" question — do religious beliefs influence political beliefs, or do political beliefs influence religious beliefs? They note a principle of psychology is that people seek "cognitive consistency" among their ideas and ideals.

There is no simple answer. The relationship is strong enough in both directions that no one can afford to assume, as most observers do, that when a politician talks about religion, he is merely engaging in a cynical form of campaigning. We need to pay far more attention to politicians' religious beliefs and what they tell the Knights of Columbus or the National Association of Evangelicals — those may be the most revealing speeches of all.

Correspondence

(Continued from page 418)

their very limited success. The underlying problem is generally acknowledged: The U.S. does not now have, nor has ever had, consensus on a rational agricultural policy. We lurch from disaster to disaster with haphazard programs. The only people to benefit are the speculators and the agribusiness giants who can manipulate the government policy-makers.

How shall we agree on a rational, international, agricultural program? How can we ever get a discussion going?

The process and product of the U.S. bishops on peace may be a model. As a companion piece to that document, or a foundation of the document on the economy, would the bishops address the principles that would form an agricultural policy for this nation?

In truth, food policy is every bit as demanding of the church's attention as is nuclear war. May we as church have the faith to address long-range agricultural policy.

(REV.) JOHN ZEITLER
Program/Outreach Coordinator
National Catholic Rural
Life Conference

Religion & politics

Columbus, Ohio

To the Editors: The article "Why the Pastoral is Shocking," by Gerald P. Fogarty in the issue of 3 June 1983, which seems quite good to me, brought to mind the remarkable letter of Al Smith to Charles C. Marshall, in the May 1927 issue of the *Atlantic Monthly*, and which is included in Edward Weeks's "Jubilee" collection of material from that magazine which was published in 1957.

Especially interesting is Smith's observation, starting at page 389 of the anthology: "But in the wildest dreams of your imagination you cannot conjure up a possible conflict between religious principle and political duty in the United States, except on the unthinkable hypothesis that some laws were to be passed which violated the common morality of all God-fearing men." He goes on to point out that in such a case the reactions of Protestants and Catholics would be the same.

Does not our nation's rush towards an ever-increasing nuclear arsenal constitute such a law? How can any who profess to be followers of Jesus remain silent?

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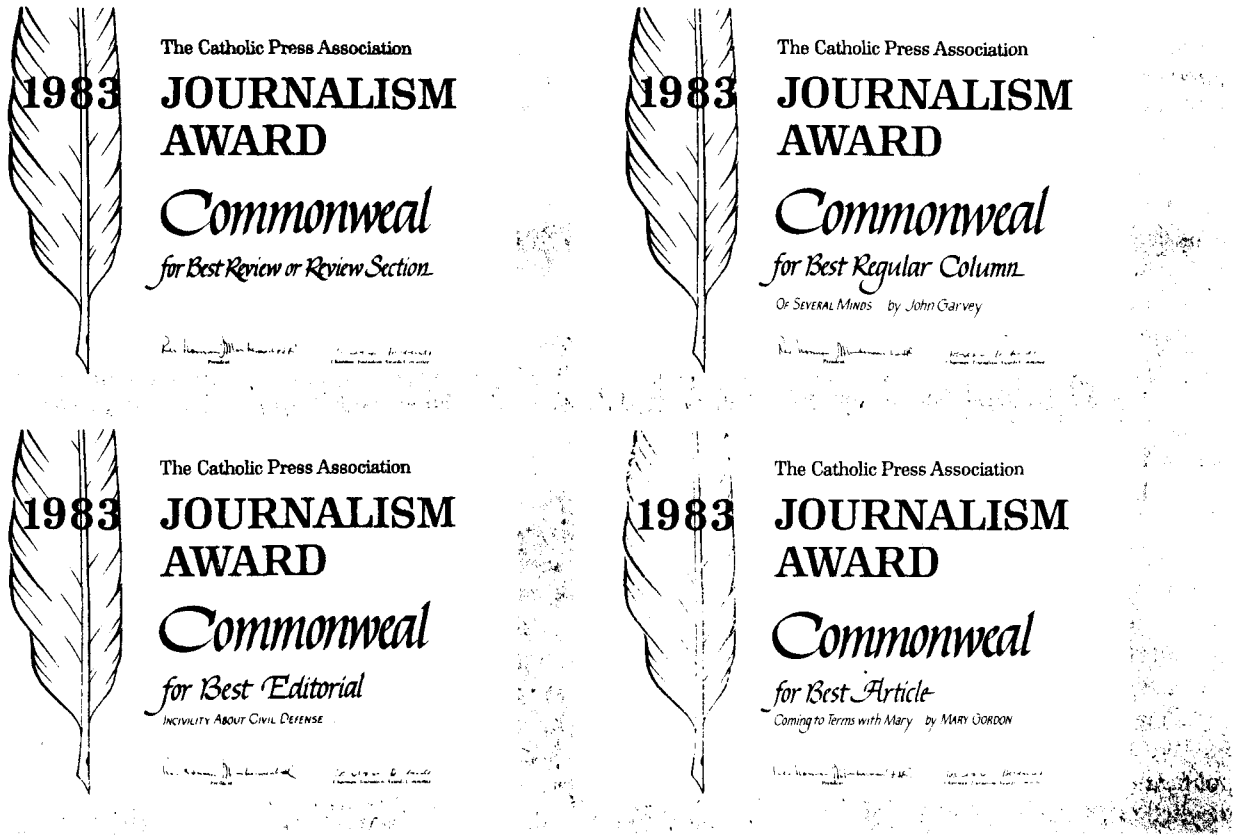

FOR THE second consecutive year, the Catholic Press Association's first-place award for magazine columns went to John Garvey.

First-place for best article was awarded to "Coming to Terms with Mary" by novelist Mary Gordon.

Of the editorial "Incivility and Civil Defense," winner of the Catholic Press Association's first-place award for magazine editorials, the judges wrote: "It is rational, clearly and succinctly written, and marshals the facts beautifully" — a standard *Commonweal* tries to meet with *all* its editorials.

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